

Caithness and Sutherland Action Programme Prògram Gnìomh Ghallaibh agus Chataibh

September 2020



CAITHNESS & SUTHERLAND TOWN CENTRE ACTION PROGRAMME

This Action Programme outlines steps that may be taken by a range of individuals and bodies to improve the main town centres in Caithness and Sutherland: Brora, Dornoch, Golspie, Thurso and Wick. The Action Programme is associated with the [Town Centre Strategy](#) which was approved by the area committees as Supplementary Guidance to the [Caithness and Sutherland Local Development Plan \(CaSPlan\)](#) in February 2020. Each of the Potential Actions have been identified based on the evidence gathered from the Council's [Town Centre Health Checks](#) and from the feedback we received during the public consultation on the Strategy.

Following the approach set out in the [Town Centre Toolkit](#), we have identified how each project helps to deliver the themes 'Attractive', 'Active' and 'Accessible'. Also included is information relating to timescales as well as identifying the stakeholder who will likely lead on delivering these local improvements.

It is intended that the Action Programme, along with the Strategy, will be a tool for a wide range of organisations and individuals to support the local area. It can help steer investment decisions and provide a basis on which action by community organisations may be supported.

BRORA

Project	Toolkit Themes			Potential Action	Reference to actions in Town Centre Strategy	When will it happen?			Key Stakeholders/ Who will make it happen?	Status
	ACCESSIBLE	ACTIVE	ATTRACTIVE			SHORT TERM	MEDIUM TERM	LONG TERM		
A9 Trunk Road				Assess the need for and identify appropriate traffic management measures and active travel improvements alongside, and across, the A9 trunk road which balance the needs of the local community and the strategic functions of both the A9 trunk road and the town centre.	1				Transport Scotland, THC, HiTrans, Community groups	
Visitor Facilities				Improve the visitor facilities (cycle and vehicle) within the town centre	2				THC	
Wayfinding				Develop wayfinding/signposting strategy for both pedestrians and vehicles	3				THC, TS	
John o' Groats Trail				Enhance/promote the John o' Groats Trail long distance route that goes through the town centre.	4				Friends of John o' Groats Trail	
Derelict/Eyesore Buildings				Identify ways to help encourage vacant units to be brought back into active use	5				Shop owners, Community group(s)	
Fountain Square				Enhancement of Fountain Square including redevelopment of Braes Hotel	7				Landowner(s), Community group(s), THC	
Station Square				Create further visitor facilities at and improve appearance of Station Square	8				No lead at present	
Vision for Brora				Prepare 'Vision for Brora' pilot project maximise benefits from NC500 tourists.	9				Brora NC500 Group, North Highland Initiative, Brora and District Action Group (BaDAG)	Ongoing project which has secured funding and delivered concept designs of Brora's vision.

DORNOCH

Project	Toolkit Themes			Potential Action	Reference to actions in Town Centre Strategy	When will it happen?			Key Stakeholders/Who will make it happen?	Status
	ACCESSIBLE	ACTIVE	ATTRACTIVE			SHORT TERM	MEDIUM TERM	LONG TERM		
Main Square				Develop a strategy for the main square to improve the public realm, better define street design, parking arrangements and layout.	1				Dornoch Area Community Interest Company (DACIC), THC, Other stakeholders and users	
Former Police Station				Incorporate secure and/or covered cycle parking into plans for a community and enterprise space at the former police station.	2				DACIC	
John o' Groats Trail				Enhance/promote the John o' Groats Trail long distance route that goes through the town centre.	3				Friends of John o' Groats Trail	
Coach Parking				Create a designated area for coach, motorhome, campervan parking, potentially at the former abattoir site at Dornoch South, to alleviate pressure on the town centre during peak tourism periods.	4				DACIC, THC	DACIC are in the process of purchasing Dornoch South and will submit an application to the Rural Transport Infrastructure Fund in October and will now include Motorhome parking within that.
Retail				Presumption against any proposals which reduce active frontages within the town centre, particularly any proposals to convert retail units to other uses.	5				THC, Landowners	
Shore Street				Renovate the existing public toilet facility on Shore Street.	6				Dornoch Area Community Council (DACC), THC	

GOLSPIE

Project	Toolkit Themes			Potential Action	Reference to actions in Town Centre Strategy	When will it happen?			Key Stakeholders/Who will make it happen?	Status
	ACCESSIBLE	ACTIVE	ATTRACTIVE			SHORT TERM	MEDIUM TERM	LONG TERM		
A9 Trunk Road				Assess the need for and identify appropriate traffic management measures and active travel improvements alongside, and across, the A9 trunk road which balance the needs of the local community and the strategic functions of both the A9 trunk road and town centre.	1				Transport Scotland, THC, HiTrans, Community groups	
Cycle Parking				Identify key locations and funding opportunities for creating secure and/or covered cycle parking.	2				HiTrans	
Active Travel				Enhance the role of the seafront promenade as the main active travel corridor through the settlement, by improving signage, surface materials and cycle infrastructure.	3				THC, HiTrans, Go Golspie	

Seafront				Identify potential opportunities along the seafront promenade for the creation of restaurants/cafes and other retail/tourism uses.	4				Go Golspie	
John o' Groats Trail				Enhance/promote the John o' Groats Trail long distance route that goes through the town centre.	5				Friends of John o' Groats Trail	
YMCA Building				Renovation of the vacant YMCA building to form much needed, modern social and developmental space.	6				Go Golspie	Funding awarded by the Scottish Land Fund to carry out survey and valuation work of the building.
Wayfinding				Create signage strategy to promote the wide range of facilities and attractions.	7				Go Golspie	
Fountain Road				Create a strategy for the reconfiguration of the parking areas and public open space between Fountain Road and the school	8				Go Golspie, THC	
Shore Street Car Park				Improve the overall appearance and function of the Shore Street car park.	9				THC	
Traffic				Explore potential for creating a one way system on the lane west of the Coop to enhance pedestrian safety and improve the flow of traffic.	10				Go Golspie, THC, TS	
Public Art				Identify further opportunities for the installation of public art	11				THC, Community Groups	
Facilities				Upgrade the street furniture currently in place.	12				THC, Community Groups	

THURSO

Project	Toolkit Themes			Potential Action	Reference to actions in Town Centre Strategy	When will it happen?			Key Stakeholders/ Who will make it happen?	Status
	ACCESSIBLE	ACTIVE	ATTRACTIVE			SHORT TERM	MEDIUM TERM	LONG TERM		
Traffic				Assess the need for and identify appropriate traffic management measures and active travel improvements alongside, and across, the A9 trunk road which balance the needs of the local community and the strategic functions of both the A9 trunk road and the town centre.	1				THC, Transport Scotland, Thurso Community Development Trust (TCDT), Community Groups	
Cycle Infrastructure				Improve cycling infrastructure in the town including: upgrade the junction at St George's Street/Sinclair Street; explore options to better support cycling on the High Street; and cycle parking points.	2				THC, HiTrans, TCDT, TS	
Heritage & Arts				Maximise opportunities which help to develop and promote the rich culture and heritage of the area and wide range of facilities and attractions within Thurso town centre.	3				High Life Highland	
Retail and Business				Long term strategy to consolidate the current wide distribution of retail units and other businesses within a more central core and support change of use of vacant units to residential outwith this area.	4				THC	
Flood Protection Scheme				Includes a Flood Protection Study and permissions necessary for preferred solution. Will allow for grant bid to be submitted	4				THC, SNH	A hydraulic model of the River Thurso has been completed. Economic analysis is currently ongoing
Public Realm				Improve the quality of the public realm, including the introduction of green infrastructure, at the High Street and take steps to revitalise the square area in front of Caithness Horizons.	5				THC, TCDT, TS	

Harbour, River and Seafront				Identify and implement ways in which to improve the streetscape, public realm and active travel links at the harbour and along the river and sea front.	6				THC, TCDT	Ongoing project which has renovated the derelict public toilets at the harbour and is engaging with the community to identify other potential harbour developments
-----------------------------	--	--	--	---	---	--	--	--	-----------	--

WICK

Project	Toolkit Themes			Potential Action	Reference to actions in Town Centre Strategy	When will it happen?			Key Stakeholders/ Who will make it happen?	Status
	ACCESSIBLE	ACTIVE	ATTRACTIVE			SHORT TERM	MEDIUM TERM	LONG TERM		
Bridge Street				Identify potential traffic management measures on Bridge Street to enhance the pedestrian experience and provide greater priority to active travel movement.	1				THC, Wick Development Trust (WDT)	
Cycle Infrastructure				Identify ways of improving cycling infrastructure both in terms of movement through the town centre and provision of secure and/or covered cycle parking.	2				THC, HiTrans, WDT, Sustrans	
Public Realm				Wick Street Design Project - a collaborative design with community to develop a concept design for a more welcoming, attractive and accessible town centre including the High Street, Market Square and Bridge Street.	3				Sustrans, Royal Burgh of Wick Community Council, WDT, THC	Community engagement and design process - rescheduled into Autumn due to pandemic - Dependent on additional funding Proposed concept design to be showcased and open for community comments in September 2020. Handover of the project to THC in November 2020 for further development, subject to additional funding.
John o' Groats Trail				Enhance/promote the John o' Groats Trail long distance route that goes through the town centre.	4				Friends of John o' Groats Trail	
Wayfinding				Develop a clearer and more effective recommendations for cohesive, attractive signage and creative wayfinding provided through Wick Street Design Project. wayfinding and sign posting strategy for both pedestrians and vehicles.	5				Wick Development Trust (WDT), THC, Wick Paths	
Original Factory Shop				Create an anchor development by acquiring the former Original Factory Shop building on the High Street and convert it to a mix of modern retail, enterprise and business spaces.	6				Wick Development Trust (WDT), THC	Project is on hold given the progress that has been made on acquiring two other sites in the high street.
Retail				Address the large number of vacant units in the town centre and promote the principle of changes to non-retail use outwith the prime retail area.	7				Wick Development Trust (WDT), Shop owners	WDT have secured two prominent eyesore buildings with work due to commence to allow re-development of the site.
Riverside Car Park				Redesign and upgrade of the riverside car park area including: resurfacing and extension; electric vehicles charging points; new cycle and bus shelters; tree planting and flower tubs; and a town centre interpretation board.	8				THC, Wick Development Trust (WDT)	

Market Place				Improvements to Market Place and its immediate surroundings to make the most of its town square function and establish it as the focal point of the town. This could include: better signage; building on its sheltered position and existing nearby businesses; and providing opportunity to address the lack of green infrastructure and the perception of it being sterile and hard.	9				THC, Sustrans, Community Groups, Wick Development Trust (WDT)	Sustrans design led project is nearing completion with next steps to identify funding sources. Proposed concept design to be showcased and open for community comments in September 2020. Handover of the project to THC in November 2020 for further development, subject to additional funding.
Public Art				Install artwork into vacant shop windows to enhance the appearance of the area and as a means of introducing public art and enhance the sense of place.	10				Wick Development Trust (WDT)	
Bridge Street				Identify ways to improve the environment and sense of safety to the north of Bridge Street which is generally unattractive and dominated by the rears of many properties, some derelict, and the Poundstretcher service yard.	11				Wick Development Trust (WDT), shop owners	
The Shore				Redevelop the prominent derelict site at The Shore (allocated WK11 in CaSPlan) could help to draw visitors towards the area and may be a catalyst for further regeneration.	12				No lead at present	

