

# **AGENDA ITEM 5**

## **REPORT NO. LA/26/18**

### **HIGHLAND COUNCIL**

**Committee:** Lochaber Committee

**Date:** 7 November 2018

**Report Title:** Fort William 2040 Consultation Workshop

**Report By:** Report by Director of Development and Infrastructure

#### **1. Purpose/Executive Summary**

1.1 This report presents the outcome of a major consultation exercise held in September 2018 which brought together a wide range of stakeholders to create a vision for the future of Fort William, in its wider Lochaber context, and to prepare a Delivery Programme outlining projects, responsibilities and actions for delivering that vision. The report presents the findings of the consultation and seeks approval for a recommended approach to ongoing monitoring and collaboration in implementing the actions outlined in the Delivery Programme, and the vision for Fort William.

#### **2. Recommendations**

2.1 Members are asked to:

- i. note the comments made and views expressed at the FW2040 event and through other consultation methods as summarised at **Appendix 1**;
- ii. consider and agree the new FW2040 vision statements at **Appendix 2** and diagram (to be presented at the Committee meeting), and approve their submission to Reporters carrying out the Examination of the West Highland and Islands Local Development Plan (WestPlan) for consideration to be included in the final plan for adoption;
- iii. note and approve the FW2040 Delivery Programme at **Appendix 3**, including actions listed against the Highland Council, and the corresponding FW2040 Masterplan at **Appendix 4** which will be updated accordingly;
- iv. note the additional / aspirational projects raised at the event at page 6 of **Appendix 3** many of which require further testing and feasibility in consultation with community and will be monitored on an ongoing basis for consideration to be included in the FW2040 Delivery Programme;

- v. agree for the approved FW2040 Delivery Programme and Masterplan (**Appendices 3 and 4**) to be submitted to Reporters carrying out the Examination of the wider WestPlan for their consideration, and for Council officers to include them in the wider WestPlan Delivery Programme that will accompany the final WestPlan for adoption;
- vi. agree for officers to incorporate the items at **Appendix 2 and 3** into a final feedback report on the Fort William 2040 Workshop to be published as soon as practicable (noting that further formatting and presentational improvements are required prior to publication), also reflecting the actions and next steps for delivery agreed through the other recommendations herein; and
- vii. agree for the Lochaber Committee to oversee the ongoing monitoring of the FW2040 Delivery Programme through an annual review, informed by an annual public engagement event to review progress.

### **3. Background**

- 3.1 A number of significant developments and service and infrastructure improvements are under active consideration for Fort William over the next few years, including major new employment opportunities, a new hospital and educational facilities. These projects will help to provide new jobs and improve public services for the town and the wider Lochaber area. The West Highland and Islands Local Development Plan (WestPlan) – which was approved by the Lochaber Committee for submission to Scottish Ministers in April 2018 and has been under Examination since 7<sup>th</sup> August – reflects the majority of these developments and service improvements to support their future delivery. Building upon the emerging WestPlan, the FW2040 event was envisaged as a way to collaborate with local communities, businesses, landowners and potential investors to:
  - create a vision for the type of place people wanted Fort William to be, in its wider Lochaber context;
  - consider how particular developments or projects – both committed and aspirational - might help to achieve that vision;
  - agree actions and responsibilities for delivering these developments or projects, and the overall vision; and
  - initiate a programme of ongoing monitoring and engagement to review progress towards delivery and achieving the longer term vision.
- 3.2 The following sections of the report provide: an overview of the approach taken to the consultation (Section 4); details of feedback gathered through the consultation and the resulting vision for Fort William (Section 5); details of the FW2040 Delivery Programme to support delivery (Section 6); and the proposed next steps for this work (Section 7).

### **4. The FW2040 Consultation**

- 4.1 At its 11 April 2018 meeting the Lochaber Committee agreed for a public consultation to be held on a future vision for Fort William, under the FW2040 heading. In line with the actions of that Committee meeting, details of the consultation were agreed with Members, and the main consultation event was held at the Nevis Centre on 12 September 2018. This open public event was widely advertised through the local press and social media resulting in over 120 participants attending during the day including

members of the public, local community groups, business representatives, public agencies and the private sector. The event was organised in partnership with officers from Scottish Government and Highlands and Islands Enterprise, and these organisations jointly funded the event.

- 4.2 In the build up to the event, there was a conscious attempt to reach out to people, particularly the age groups most likely to be affected by and involved in future changes in Fort William. Tailored consultation techniques were used to engage a variety of local young people including the Highland Council Youth Convener, local High Schools and local Youth Forums. The full range of consultation methods used to gather people's views can be summarised as follows:
- FW2040 School Workshops held at Lochaber and Ardnamurchan High Schools;
  - videos submitted by Lochaber Youth groups and the Highland Council Youth Convener;
  - video interviews with students at West Highland College / UHI and local businesses which helped to create a FW2040 Promotional Video;
  - views expressed through [an online consultation](#) hosted on the Council's consultation portal, which remained open until more than 2 weeks after the event;
  - views expressed through the [FW2040 Facebook Event](#); and
  - comments submitted by email to the Highland Council in response to the FW2040 event.
- 4.3 The collaborative approach taken in carrying out the FW2040 work was aimed directly at ensuring that a wide range of people with an interest in the future of Fort William had the chance to contribute to this future vision, and were directly involved in establishing actions and responsibilities for delivery. It also aims to provide a means of recording, communicating and monitoring the actions required to deliver individual projects, and the wider vision.
- 4.4 In carrying out the FW2040 consultation, and in view of the fact that the emerging West Highland and Islands Local Development Plan (WestPlan) had been approved by Highland Council and reached the Examination stage (and which is ongoing for the next few months), there was an eagerness to complement and build upon the outcomes and placemaking principles in the emerging plan. The event therefore used these as the foundation for agreeing a future vision for the town, and to test the value of individual developments and projects.
- 4.5 Alongside, a FW2040 Masterplan diagram was prepared that identifies committed projects. The vast majority of these are existing commitments identified in one or more of the following: the emerging Local Development Plan, Lochaber Committee area priorities, and priorities of local community organisations, businesses and community planning groups.
- 4.6 To provide a framework for the delivery of future projects, and given the range of significant changes proposed in the town, there was a willingness to prepare a Delivery Programme that would help to monitor and steer the delivery of the FW2040 vision and projects, and identify and help tackle funding challenges for delivery. The FW2040 Delivery Programme was also seen as a feed-in to the formal statutory Delivery Programme that the Council has to prepare to support the implementation of the emerging Local Development Plan.

## 5. Feedback from the FW2040 Consultation

- 5.1 The consultation used a variety of methods (outlined in paragraph 4.2) which gathered feedback on a range of issues and projects from the general public, local community groups, public agencies and the private sector. **Appendix 1** summarises these comments under the three strategic, interrelated priorities that evolved through the consultation, which reflected that Fort William should be:
- **A Great Place to Live**
  - **A Connected Place**
  - **A Place Facing Water**
- 5.2 Alongside, it was acknowledged that delivering the collective ambition relies on a fourth overarching theme – **A Place with Collective Ambition** – which involves new ways of working based on strong partnership and good communication on an ongoing basis.
- 5.3 Feedback on the projects outlined on the initial FW2040 Masterplan reflected broad consensus support for almost all projects and ideas. There are two particular projects where differences of opinion were highlighted – these were the Corpach Port expansion and the type of fuel to be used in the future heat supply network in the urban area. The Corpach Port proposal is reflected in the emerging WestPlan subject to conclusion of the current Examination process. It is also recognised that implementation and delivery of these two projects will require ongoing and detailed consultation with affected parties to broker a consensus way forward. For example, there may be site-specific and/or technical solutions to resolve these differences. Careful masterplanning of the Corpach Port proposal may be able to mitigate any noise, air pollution, safety and adverse visual impact issues. Similarly, a town network of gas supply pipes and plant could be capable of adaptation to low or zero carbon fuels such as hydrogen. There was however support for a cheaper source of heat supply to be found and there was support for district heating to be explored further.
- 5.4 The feedback gathered from the consultation evolved into three place-based priorities for Fort William for which were captured in illustrations and written statements that are set out in full at **Appendix 2**. The three illustrations are currently being amalgamated into a single vision diagram that will be prepared in time for presentation to Committee. To validate and make full use of this feedback from participants in the consultation, and given that these outputs complement the emerging WestPlan outcomes and placemaking priorities, it is felt that that the vision diagram and statements would be best placed within the emerging act as a new vision for Fort William against which the suitability of future development proposals would be measured, alongside the existing plan outcomes, placemaking principles for Fort William and other policies of the Plan. As such, it is proposed that the vision diagram and statements be submitted to the Reporters carrying out the Examination of the WestPlan for consideration to be included in the final plan for adoption.

## 6. FW2040 Delivery Programme

- 6.1 The FW2040 Delivery Programme at **Appendix 3** was formulated from collective input to the FW2040 consultation. Its purpose is to monitor and coordinate FW2040 projects and it is intended to be routinely updated alongside the accompanying FW2040 Masterplan at **Appendix 4**. The first table of the Delivery Programme at **Appendix 3** outlines the actions, timescales and responsibilities for committed projects, and the second table lists the additional or aspirational projects highlighted through the

FW2040 consultation. Please note this requires further formatting and presentational improvements prior to publication. Reference to a potential funding agency does not necessarily indicate a commitment from that agency to fund any particular project.

- 6.2 Elected Members' attention is drawn in particular to the following:
- Highland Council is a delivery partner for many of the projects and ideas;
  - The degree of detail attached and existing commitment to each project and idea ranges from short term, fully designed and funded capital programme schemes to medium to longer term aspirational projects; and
  - Many participants in the consultation called for one or several projects and ideas to be progress far sooner than 2040 and that the new vision should steer these future development. The FW2040 Delivery Programme aims to provide greater certainty on the implementation of these projects on an ongoing basis.
- 6.3 In addition, a number of additional developments or projects were raised at the event and these are listed in the second table of **Appendix 3**. Members are asked to consider these and provide feedback on their suitability, status and their potential delivery.
- 6.4 The FW2040 Delivery Programme is intended to act as a “live” monitoring document that is used proactively to coordinate and monitoring the delivery of future development and to help tackle barriers to delivery. It is proposed to be updated on an ongoing basis in tandem with the FW2040 Masterplan. This would enable the delivery process to be responsive and flexible to any changes in the commercial markets, public funding availability, technology and the potential catalyst effect of certain developments which may affect the pace of delivery of the FW2040 vision. It is recommended that the Lochaber Committee oversees the monitoring of the FW2040 Delivery Programme with support from officers, with an annual public engagement event to review progress towards implementation. Members would be asked to consider and reflect upon new information on the delivery of projects and feedback from the engagement exercise and broker a consensus in checking whether the Delivery Programme is on-track and is contributing to achieving the FW2040 vision. This monitoring will also identify whether any aspirational projects need to be carried through to the committed projects table.

## 7. Next Steps

- 7.1 Subject to Committee approval of the recommendations set out in this report the next steps would be as follows:
- a. The approved Fort William vision diagram and vision statements (based on the content at with the final diagram to be presented at the Committee meeting), Delivery Programme and FW2040 Masterplan will be incorporated into a feedback report on the FW2040 event to be prepared and circulated to consultation participants as soon as practicable;
  - b. Officers will submit the following to Reporters carrying out the Examination of the West Highland and Islands Local Development Plan (WestPlan):
    - The approved Fort William vision diagram and statements to request their inclusion in the plan as a vision for Fort William; and
    - The approved FW2040 Delivery Programme and Masterplan (Appendices 3 and 4) for consideration.
  - c. On conclusion of the WestPlan Examination the approved FW2040 Delivery Programme will be incorporated into the wider WestPlan Delivery Programme for

publication;

- d. The FW2040 Delivery Programme and Masterplan will be updated on an ongoing basis, with an annual review being considered through public engagement and approval by the Lochaber Committee;

Follow-up meetings have also been requested by the Fort William Area Community Council Partnership and with

## **8. Implications**

- 8.1 Resource: resources to complete and publish the Vision, Masterplan and Delivery Programme documentation are allowed for within the Service budget.
- 8.2 Legal: the FW2040 Masterplan and Delivery Programme are not intended to form part of the Council's statutory development plan for the area and are therefore very unlikely to be subject to any legal challenge. The decision to include the FW2040 Vision diagram and statements will rest with the Examination Reporters.
- 8.3 Community (Equality, Poverty and Rural): the related local development plan has been subject to Equalities Impact Assessment (EqIA) screening and found not to require a full EqIA. One of FW2040's aims is to make Fort William a more effective "engine" to drive the economy of the wider Lochaber area and to make the town a focus for infrastructure network and facility improvements that will also benefit the rural hinterland of the town. Poverty issues are addressed by the Programme's support for employment, district heating and affordable housing opportunities, and improved accessibility to facilities via free or cheaper travel modes.
- 8.4 Climate Change / Carbon Clever: the related development plan has been subject to several rounds of environmental assessment including Habitats Regulations Appraisal (HRA) and Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) informed through consultation with Scottish Natural Heritage and other consultation authorities. If any significant proposals not currently within the plan progress before its formal review then these would be required to undertake further environmental and other assessment work.
- 8.5 Risk: There are no known significant risks associated with this item.
- 8.6 Gaelic: the finalised FW2040 documentation will have Gaelic headings added.

Designation: Director of Development and Infrastructure

Date: 26 October 2018

Authors: Scott Dalgarno, Tim Stott - Development Plans

Background Papers:

1. West Highland and Islands Proposed Local Development Plan: (As Submitted to Scottish Ministers): July 2018
2. Lochaber Committee Minutes: 11 April 2018

The above documents are available via: [www.highland.gov.uk](http://www.highland.gov.uk)

## APPENDIX 1: SUMMARY OF ISSUES RAISED AT THE SEPTEMBER FW2040 EVENT AND IN RELATED REPRESENTATIONS

Feedback gathered at the FW2040 consultation event and through a wide range of other consultation methods is set out below. This includes:

- views expressed at the FW2040 workshop event held on Wednesday 12<sup>th</sup> September;
- feedback gathered at FW2040 School Workshops held at Lochaber and Ardnamurchan High Schools;
- video feedback submitted by Lochaber Youth groups and the Highland Council Youth Convener;
- video interviews with students at West Highland College / UHI and local businesses which helped to create a FW2040 Promotional Video;
- views expressed through [an online consultation](#) hosted on the Council's consultation portal, which remained open until more than 2 weeks after the event;
- views expressed through the [FW2040 Facebook Event](#); and
- comments submitted by email to the Highland Council in response to the FW2040 event.

These opinions have been grouped under the three strategic, interrelated priorities highlighted through the FW2040 consultation – **A Great Place to Live, A Connected Place**, and **A Place Facing Water**. Alongside, feedback related to how this work is taken forward is summarised under a final theme: **A Place with Collective Ambition**.

No attempt has been made to reconcile any real or potential conflicts between the opinions expressed. Opinions expressed by multiple, unconnected respondents are indicated with (M) after the point made.

### ***a great place to live***

- **An exemplar, high quality place where ambitions can be realised (M)** – sufficient improvements, of a high quality and happening quickly enough to retain and attract a diverse range of residents, visitors and enterprises
- **A place with sufficient, high quality community facilities** - a modern hospital (M), more picnic areas, public toilets (M), a better swimming pool (bigger facility and better timetabling), a go-kart track, facilities for teenagers, dog walking areas, a concert hall / arts and culture venue, a sports stadium / centre / dome (including gymnastics facility, bigger gymnasium) at An Aird or Blar Mor, a pump track, a BMX track, a skate park, extensions to burial grounds (Glen Nevis and Kilmallie), a better athletics track, a covered 4G outdoor sports pitch, a trampoline park, better emergency service facilities, schools as genuine community hubs
- **A place with sufficient, high quality tourist facilities and accommodation** - more, especially wet weather facilities / attractions (Glen Nevis Outdoor Heritage and Activity Centre, visitor/recreational facility at Banavie, indoor skiing facility at Nevis Range, an ice rink, a zoo, possible event venue at Inverlochy Castle Estate [which has and could expand its complementary accommodation], an aquarium, a museum of mountaineering, a cinema, a museum of engineering), separate suggestions for new hotels at smelter site entrance and Nevis Forest, facilities with longer daily opening hours and out of season, a caravan / camper servicing area

- **A place with a revitalised town centre** - more independent shops in High Street, free/cheap car parking for town centre, better customer care, better choice of coffee shops and eateries, more clothes shops (M), extended opening hours, an indoor shopping centre/hub (M), a music shop, more unique local artisan shops selling locally produced goods, a new attractive “commercial / service quarter” at Blar Mor, a more vibrant night time economy including nightclubs
- **A place for people who love the outdoors** – outdoor assets safeguarded and enhanced (landscape, scenery, crofting landscape), reaffirmed Outdoor Capital brand, kayaking centre at tailrace, more outdoor sports facilities at Nevis Range, a shooting/paintball range, more adrenalin sports facilities
- **A place with a distinctive, local, cultural identity** - the unique identity and history of local people, separate communities and their culture is safeguarded and promoted (M) (e.g. tourism based on diaspora homecoming, hosting the Mod, gateway entrances with a “wow factor” and local relevance in the form of public art or similar, branding the town as a traditional music capital), more meeting places to promote social cohesion
- **A place with sufficient/high quality affordable/private housing** - at least 1,000 new houses, for local people, for temporary workers, on leisure centre site, at Inverlochry Castle Estate, at West End Car Park, at Black Parks, outwith right to buy and letting to tourism market, floating accommodation in loch / canal for temporary workers, houseboats, for the elderly, to retain young people
- **A safer place to live** - better control of anti-social behaviour, 20mph speed limit for residential areas and trunk roads through urban area, shared spaces wherever possible, to bring up children
- **An affordable place to live** - affordable energy prices, affordable housing via more new building, to retain young people, affordable rents/rates for town centre enterprises and school lets by the community, affordable public transport prices
- **A sustainable place to live** - green energy from local renewable sources like hydro-electric, a climate change proofed town, a level of growth that respects the physical and environmental constraints of the settlement, odour free sustainable waste management solutions (not landfill sites like at Duiskey), a higher percentage of personal and business journeys made by (more) sustainable means, a town and wider area network of electric vehicle charging infrastructure, an exemplar low carbon town by 2035 or 2050 (M), energy efficient buildings, little or no traffic congestion
- **A place that hosts interesting and exciting events** - more community and other events
- **A place to learn** - better, locally based training opportunities, adequate nursery, primary, secondary and tertiary provision, 3-18 campus on Blar Mor, more courses at University, crèche at University so single parents can study, apprenticeships in all sectors not just the trades
- **A place that is a focus for the success of the wider Lochaber and West Highland area** – the benefits of growth should be dispersed to surrounding communities such as Spean Bridge (M)
- **A place with a diverse economy and sufficient, high quality employment opportunities** - not too dependent upon a few major industrial enterprises or the tourism sector and their fluctuating employment levels, to retain young people, with attractive salary levels and other inducements
- **A place with a plentiful and skilled local workforce** - skills in all sectors but particularly construction,
- **A place with an empowered local community** - widespread community land ownership, community stake in renewable energy developments, a prevalent volunteering culture

- **A place with a healthy local population** - pollution (noise, light, air) controlled and reduced (in particular at Corpach port (M), Duiskey landfill, Corpach marina), taking advantage of a safeguarded and improved network of accessible greenspace, a clean place without litter or other fly-tipped waste, more/better allotments and community growing spaces

### ***a connected place***

- **A place with better trunk road connectivity** (M) - lay-bys for HGVs travelling on trunk roads, to support increased construction traffic, A830 improved (Caol Link Road), A82 improved (throughout Lochaber, new link from Rannoch Moor to Fort William via Ben Nevis tunnel, to Glasgow, Nevis Bank junction improved, early priority junction improvements including slip lanes, upgrade of A861 as alternative if A82 blocked, fixed link at Corran Narrows or improved ferry service), tunnels for all important connections to avoid severance caused by at grade routes
- **A place with an extended public sewerage network** - to connect future development at Nevis Forest to public sewerage
- **A place with a better network of facilities for cyclists** - bike storage within all developments and on public transport, changing and drying facilities for cyclists
- **A place with better internet and other information connectivity** – better visitor orientation information in town centre, people should be able to stay locally but connect globally, faster internet connections speeds (all of Lochaber, in parallel with new development, community networks, fibre to door & 4G)
- **A place with opportunities to change to more sustainable modes of travel** (M) - inter-modal freight terminal at Corpach, Park and ride facilities at the entrances to the urban area to relieve the primary source of congestion (tourist traffic), all new facilities should be walkable (i.e. they should be within the town centre), convenient and affordable network of electric vehicle charging points
- **A place with a better public transport connectivity** (M) - to Glasgow and Inverness (including rail), to Nevis Range on Sundays, to surrounding rural villages, with greater community involvement, into Glen Nevis, more reliability, faster, better timetabling, hop on/off electric bus connecting tourist and local facility sites (M), a proper bus station, real time transport timetabling information to improve public trust in the reliability of public transport
- **A place with a better active travel network** (M) - new/improved routes: through enhanced green spaces and corridors with attractive outlooks; across mouth of River Lochy; across Lochy at Muirshearlich; along Puggy Line (between Fort William and Nevis Range); across Lochy from Inverloch Castle Estate to Blar Mor; to alloy wheel plant; to Glen Nevis; to provide safe pedestrian crossing points of A830 at Banavie and Corpach; from Ballachulish to Fort William to provide a safe cycle route; to/from High School – also routes: suitable for all users; segregated; of a good quality surface; with better facilities (Great Glen Way) without mobility barriers; and, not compromised by flood and road schemes.
- **A place with a better rail network** (M) - more passing loops, a link to the Highland Mainline at Dalwhinnie, rail freight to/from Corpach & smelter, better rolling stock, better timetabling, a light rail/tram system within the urban area, light rail connections to Glenfinnan, Nevis Forest and Spean Bridge
- **A place with better air connections** - seaplane service connections to Glasgow and Skye, an airstrip, permanent helipads for search and rescue and medical emergencies
- **A place with better water transport connections** - canal and Loch Linnhe water buses and freight movements, more reliable ferry connections to the islands
- **A place with sufficient, well located event parking** - e.g. Blar Mor needed for World Cup Downhill Mountain biking

## ***a place facing water***

- **A place with better marine access** - Town Pier improved (for business and tourism, down to MLWS, 120m longer, THC owned so easier to implement), an even more popular cruise liner destination because of faster and more efficient on/off shore transfers, a town centre marina, retention and improvement of the Camasnagaul ferry route and associated facilities
- **A place with an attractive, seaward outlook** (M) - active travel route along all of waterfront, a more colourful waterfront, the town centre re-connected with the loch (by demolition / redevelopment of town centre buildings), and reduction of the severance and adverse visual impact of the A82 perhaps using tree planting between town centre and A82
- **A place with a productive waterfront** - tidal / run-of-river energy scheme at mouth of Lochy, local economic spin offs of cruise liner visits maximised, underwater diving centre retained / improved, land reclamation (perhaps using surplus Coire Glas scheme material) for housing, commercial uses and/or a new sports / arts / museum / cultural venue on the waterfront, more / better berthing at Corpach port for industrial users
- **A waterfront with safeguarded historic and ecological interests** – in particular at Eilean nan Craobh
- **A place with an attractive and accessible canal-side** – additional / improved facilities

## ***a place with collective ambition***

- **A new harbour authority** (M) - to cover Lochs Linnhe and Eil to coordinate the many interests/projects and to lead on a Fort William marine tourism plan
- **Community benefit revenue from development proposals** – for example, a common good fund established or more money to community councils to be effective delivery partners
- **Formalised, ongoing communication between all** (M) - required between young people, community groups and public / private agencies - community need to have adequate say on proposals especially Corpach Port expansion which requires careful masterplanning, Glen Nevis and Ben Nevis which needs a Strategic Action Plan to look at enhanced facilities and visitor management, and sports facility design and funding where local clubs need to integrate with public agencies
- **Housing delivery** – a working group of landowners, developers, employers and public agencies required but also joint research on the most efficient and effective way to build on peat (to minimise carbon release but also to reduce costs)
- **Redistributed monies for specific delivery purposes** - tax/fees/rates/rents reductions/ exemptions for community projects and to revitalise the town centre, a local tourist tax to subsidise an urban electric bus service,
- **Avoiding duplication and displacement** - coordinate the location and provision of new/improved facilities so that they enhance rather than unnecessarily duplicate or displace existing provision (marinas, tourist accommodation, tourist facilities, sports facilities, retail outlets, housing)
- **Place-making** – via good masterplanning of the bigger projects / sites - involvement of an agency like Architecture and Design Scotland
- **Joint Ventures** – project specific joint venture companies where formal coordination required
- **A FW2040 that results in benefits greater than the sum of its project parts** - cross over benefits between the projects that increase the case for investment

from all parties: UHI outdoor education courses using kayaking facility; sports / recreational facilities will promote lower demand for stretched health facilities; a Corpach port intermodal freight facility will reduce HGV congestion on trunk road network; constructing new trunk roads will allow for fibre optic cabling to be installed at the same time; new trunk roads could have new active travel routes incorporated during construction; Caol Link Road could incorporate a tidal / run-of-river energy scheme; mountain medicine could be an enhanced specialism at the New Belford Hospital, an Adventure Tourism degree could be available at the new STEM centre; new/improved indoor/outdoor recreational opportunities will help retain/attract young people; the kayaking facility could be used by the emergency services for training in flood rescue; there will be a district heating opportunity from industrial operations at the smelter site; and, recreational facilities for teenagers within Fort William will reduce anti-social behaviour and improve their health.

## APPENDIX 2: FORT WILLIAM VISION

The following four themes emerged from the FW2040 consultation - three of which related to PLACE and one which concerned WAYS OF WORKING.

### 1. A GREAT PLACE TO LIVE

- Support and reinforce place identity
- Development opportunities guided to strengthen existing positive qualities
- Growth is directed by, and does not contradict, place

### 2. A CONNECTED PLACE

- Maximise opportunities for a diverse range of transport and other connecting networks including new technologies
- Ensure well connected routes for people, goods, bio-diversity, etc

### 3. A PLACE FACING WATER

- Take full advantage of existing water assets to support industry, tourism and communities
- Maximise potential for water facing activity on loch, canal, river and watercourses

### 4. A PLACE WITH COLLECTIVE AMBITION

- Delivering the FW2040 collective ambition relies on new ways of working based on strong partnership and good communication this overarching theme.



# GREAT PLACE TO LIVE

Housing is a big issue for the town to address shortfall in housing stock, diversity of offer and managing pressures for local and tourist populations.

From discussion, feedback and local knowledge it is evident the town is not a single conurbation but a sequence of separate settlements arranged around the 'knuckle' of the loch.

Corpach sitting at one end with the main town at the opposite southern end can be viewed as natural ends [anchors] in the existing and future organisation of the town.

Each local area has character, a centre, access to water... each is a destination in its own right - a place to visit for residents and visitors alike.

Between are Caol, Inverlochy and other communities separated by unique landscape and physical identities.

An emerging diagram shows a series of distinct places each with a heart/centre, connected to one another and to the wider environment, water and land.

## FW2040

Scottish Government  
Riaghaidhs na h-Alba  
gov.scot

HIE  
Highlands and Islands Enterprise  
Inntràthachd na Gàidhealtachd

The Highland Council  
Comhairle na Gàidhealtachd

# CONNECTED PLACE



Infrastructure investment emerged as a major consideration for the future of Fort William

Good digital connection. Good road and rail connection. Good opportunities for inter-modal travel, with potential to diversify and embrace new technology.

There is a need to take full advantage to add value and achieve more long term benefit from investment proposals such as flood defence measures.

Fort William is a place served by diverse modes of transport - road, rail, canal, sea-borne, cycle, walking routes.

However, the town and its parts are not well connected. A single point of connection crosses the river for vehicles. What will be the impact with increased population, freight movement and visitors?

There are opportunities to better connect – along the shore and over the river. At a strategic level the road, rail, sea, canal and active transport and walking systems can benefit from better joined up thinking and improved physical connections.

## FW2040



# WATER FACING PLACE



Few places benefit from the amenity of having a loch, river, canal and other water features on its doorstep. However, does Fort William utilise this to best advantage at present? Can more be done to capitalise on these unique assets into the future?

The view of participants was that more could be done to maximise the potential offered by water resources.

The loch in particular provided a focus for debate through the event with industrial, leisure, sport, visitor access and community links all discussed.

These are not mutually exclusive. It is not hard to imagine a waterfront that is well connected with different commercial interests sitting alongside community enterprise and leisure focus in an integrated masterplan for the waterside frontage.

The loch, river and canal are key assets to be harnessed to full advantage for leisure, health, wellbeing, enterprise, ecological and other benefits. The town's relationship with water could be better capitalised and celebrated.

## FW2040





2. Active Travel Network														AS QUICKLY AS POSSIBLE BUT AT LEAST IN PARALLEL WITH NEW DEVELOPMENT	Project sponsors THC, Sustrans, LEG, CCs, Landowners, Crown Estate, Scottish Govt., Community Trust(?), Sponsorship & donations from local businesses	Implement existing Audit, implement exemplar schemes early, secure developer contributions .	5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 11, 12, 14, 18, 19	Network should also enhance environment, sense of place and accessibility for all users - plug gaps in existing provision - . Safer Routes to School			
3. Waterfront Access															THC, Crown Estate, Scottish Govt., Transport Scotland, Marine Scotland, SSE, SEPA, SNH		1, 2, 12,	Turn town towards the loch, town centre and Corpach Canal marina			
4. Other Transport														TRAFFIC REDUCED	OTHER WATER BASED TRANSPORT	PORT	AIRPORT	Transport industry	Communication between businesses and transport providers		Need for helipad, electric bus service, seaborne transport,
5. Blar Mor Expansion																		THC, private developer NHS, UHI, retailers?	Scottish Govt. grant, NHS funding, UHI funding, HIE	6, 9, 11, 12, 18	Other housing options NE of smelter and Blackparks, better hospital – don't affect the High Street
6. Town Centre Revitalisation														OLD BELFORD	SITE	RECLAIM LAND	AT WATER FRONT	Housing Developers, THC	Link green spaces, better non car accessibility, housing, attractive waterfront	3, 7, 9, 12, 18	"Wow factor" at entrances to town

7. Lundavra / Upper Achintore										2023 COMPLETION				Link Group (as landowners), Housing Association, THC Chamber of Commerce	Overcome technical challenges of peat, Scottish Govt. money	9, 18	Need to restrict new housing being lost to holiday accommodation market
8. Caol Lochyside Flood Protection Scheme														THC, community, Scottish Govt.	Scottish Govt. funding, THC support	1, 5,	Combine with renewable energy scheme, better access to beach, active travel along defence, future proof for greater climate change, extend to town centre waterfront and reclaim land
9. Schools expansion										IN ADVANCE	OF SERIOUS NEED			THC, Skills Development Scotland	Forecast capacity relative to future housebuilding, teacher recruitment & retention, get volunteers to work in schools	12, 18	Schools should be hubs of community, better use of buildings out of hours, 3-18 campus provision, incorporate sports facilities,
10. Internet Connection Speeds										IDEALLY SOONER	IN PARALLEL	WITH	DEVELOPMENT	Community ownership, Scottish Govt.	Fibre to door & 4G Support Community Broadband	9	Not just Fort William – improvements to wider Lochaber area

11. Sports Facility Provision														All stakeholders	Audit existing facilities, set a strategy and vision then implement it		Need for new / better multi purpose spaces indoor and outdoor - as venues for sports, arts, culture, tourists, leisure, healthy activity, at Blar Mor with existing leisure centre site sold for housing
12. STEM Centre and Hospital										OPEN SEPTEMBER 2020				SFC WHC / UHI / HIE NHS Scottish Govt.	Feb / March 2019 start with 1.5 year build to 2020, 2022 new hospital, closer public agency working	9, 10, 11, 13, 14, 15, 16, 18	
13. Nevis Forest														FCS, FES, THC, HIE, Scottish Govt., Scottish Water	Expand on success of existing facilities, improve connections to FW town including sewer connection, design of buildings suitable to forest context	2, 4, 11, 12,	Possible new rail halt?
14. Canal Related Projects														Crown estate Lochiel estate Scottish canals Caol ? Scot Gov ? Local authority	All joined up together?	12	

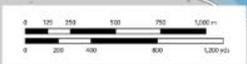






<b>Research ways to limit cost of housing development</b>															Construction Scotland Innovation Centre, THC, Liberty Group, Skills Development Scotland	Innovative ways to build on peat to get build cost down, off-site construction - economic assessment / viability of sites		
<b>A housing task force to figure out delivery mechanisms</b>															THC, Liberty, SEPA, Landowners (including Forest Enterprise Scotland)	Enable development on peat. Use Government loan funds. Create new villages with good public facilities. Reduce developer contributions where sites unviable.		

# Appendix 4 – Fort William 2040 Masterplan



The FW2040 Masterplan will accompany the FW2040 Delivery Programme and be updated to reflect its content. It is proposed to be updated on an ongoing basis, informed by an annual public consultation event, and agreed by the Lochaber Committee.

- ### Lochaber Committee Area Priorities
- A82 Realignment
  - Transport Infrastructure
  - Marine Infrastructure
  - STEM Centre
  - University Town Status for Fort William
  - New Belford Hospital
  - Health and Wellbeing
  - Increase Housing and Specialist Support Provision
  - Indoor Training Centre
  - All Weather Tourist Facilities
  - Lochaber Common Good Fund
  - Tourism Infrastructure
  - City/Islands Deal Status for Lochaber

## The Fort William 2040 Masterplan

Development	Assets	Healthcare	Town Centre
<b>Housing</b>	<b>Schools</b>	<b>Healthcare</b>	<b>Town Centre</b>
Existing	Existing	Existing	Existing
New	New/Expanded	New	New Full Fibre Network
Longer Term	<b>Indoor Sports</b>	<b>Waste Management</b>	Energy
<b>Industry</b>	Existing	Existing	Tourism
Existing	New	New	Transport
New	<b>Flood Protection</b>		Green Corridor Buffers
Longer Term	Active Travel Network Improvements		
<b>Mixed Use</b>	Improved Marine Access		
Existing			
New			
<b>Business/Tourism</b>			
Existing			
New			

Prepared by Fort William Strategic Planning and Regeneration Ltd. © Crown Copyright and Scottish Government. All Rights Reserved. Information accurate as of 10/11/2024. All Rights Reserved.