

Agenda Item	10
Report No	LA/24/25

The Highland Council

Committee: Lochaber Area

Date: 11 August 2025

Report Title: Fort William 2040 Annual Update

Report By: Assistant Chief Executive - Place

1 Purpose/Executive Summary

- 1.1 This report provides an update on the progress of the Fort William 2040 (FW2040) Masterplan and Delivery Programme. This follows the previous update which was given to Committee in August 2024 and a separate update which was provided specifically on the Fort William Town Centre Masterplan (a core project within FW2040) in January 2024. This report provides updates on all the individual projects within the wider FW2040 vision and sets out key work to be undertaken in the coming year.

2 Recommendations

2.1 Members are asked to:

- i. **Note** the progress that has been made with the individual projects within the FW2040 Masterplan as summarised at Appendix 1: FW2040 Annual Masterplan Project Update July 2025.
- ii. **Note** the wider developments that have been implemented in 2025 to enhance the delivery of the programme, specifically:
 - a) A review of the FW2040 governance arrangements which is ongoing.
 - b) Preparation of a community engagement event in November in collaboration with Lochaber Community Planning Partnership and the Area Place Planning team.
 - c) Continued engagement on specific issues and with particular interest groups through the FW2040 Community Stakeholder Group and FW2040 Transport Sub-Group.

These wider developments are expanded on in section 5 of this report.

- iii. **Support** identified priority FW2040 work areas for the coming year as summarised in section 6 of this report.

3 Implications

- 3.1 **Resource** - resources to cover the salary of the FW2040 Project Manager, update FW2040 online documentation and continue to promote the plan and engage with the local community are allowed for within the Service budget. Funding will be sought for individual projects where appropriate e.g., as they progress through the feasibility stage. No projects will be initiated until all funding is in place.
- 3.2 **Legal** - the FW2040 Masterplan and Delivery Programme do not form part of the Council's statutory development plan for the area and are therefore unlikely to be subject to any legal challenge. Individual FW2040 projects and developments will address legal requirements as necessary.
- 3.3 **Risk** - there are no known significant risks associated with this item.
- 3.4 **Health and Safety (risks arising from changes to plant, equipment, process, or people)** - there are no known health and safety risks associated with this item.
- 3.5 **Gaelic** - Gaelic headings will be used in any written publications relating to FW2040.

4 Impacts

- 4.1 In Highland, all policies, strategies or service changes are subject to an integrated screening for impact for Equalities, Poverty and Human Rights, Children's Rights and Wellbeing, Climate Change, Islands and Mainland Rural Communities, and Data Protection. Where identified as required, a full impact assessment will be undertaken.
- 4.2 Considering impacts is a core part of the decision-making process and needs to inform the decision-making process. When taking any decision, Members must give due regard to the findings of any assessment.
- 4.3 This is an update report and therefore an impact assessment is not required.

5 Wider Programme Developments

5.1 FW2040 Governance

FW2040 is a successful partnership project and continues to provide a focus for ongoing meaningful community involvement through two dedicated interest groups (see section 5.3) and specific engagement events (see section 5.2.1). The FW2040 Board's remit was however last reviewed, three years ago in November 2022 and since that time, there have been some changes in practice. Ministerial input to the programme has moved from an annual meeting to focus on a topic-by-topic or project basis e.g., the new hospital or transportation and the Fort William Integrated Transport Plan (FWITP). Performance evaluation of the programme is principally undertaken through this annual update provided to the Lochaber Area Committee. The FW2040 Board will be asked to consider if they wish to make any governance changes going forward and this will be included as an item for discussion at the next Board meeting on 25 August.

5.2 Annual Community Engagement Event

A cornerstone of the FW2040 Vision is community engagement to develop and deliver a 'place-based' approach to development in the town. At the outset of FW2040, which was based on extensive public consultation in 2018-19, it was envisaged that an annual engagement event would form part of the programme. Due to a range of circumstances, including the impacts of Covid-19, this has not been possible. It is now proposed that FW2040, in collaboration with Lochaber Community Planning Partnership (LCCP) and the Area Place Planning (APP) team, host a public engagement event in November 2025 with the aim of establishing a recognised annual event for the town and wider area where organisations and the public can connect and provide a forum where services, issues, specific developments, and/or plans can be discussed and consulted on.

- 5.2.1 In 2022, a public consultation event was held looking at progress on the FW2040 Masterplan and its constituent projects. This was held in Caol Community Centre and was well attended and well received. In early 2024, a programme of community engagement was also undertaken by FW2040 on the Fort William Town Centre Masterplan. In November 2024, the LCCP held a community networking event in Fort William Library which included consultation on the Lochaber Area Place Plan. Going forward, providing a combined event with the LCCP and APP team will help to create opportunities to co-ordinate consultations and engagement and aim to reduce 'consultation fatigue' within the community. This will also maximise the opportunities for organisations to connect with each other and their communities.
- 5.2.2 With regards to FW2040 specifically, this will allow for consideration of new information on the progress of projects such as the FWITP and ensure the Delivery Programme is on track and contributing to achieving the wider FW2040 Vision. This will also provide a key opportunity to discuss and identify any new projects that are sufficiently progressed to be added to the Masterplan.

5.3 FW2040 Interest Groups

Engagement will continue to be undertaken through two specific FW2040 groups, with meetings organised and facilitated by the FW2040 project manager. These are:-

- **FW2040 Community Stakeholder Group** - comprising Ardgour Community Council (CC), Nether Lochaber CC, Fort William, Inverlochy & Torlundy CC, Caol CC, Kilmallie CC, Spean Bridge, Roy Bridge & Achnacarry CC, Voluntary Action Lochaber, Lochaber Environmental Group, and Councillors from Ward 11 and 21; and
- **FW2040 Transport Sub-Group** - comprising The Highland Council, HITRANS, Lochaber Chamber of Commerce, Transport Scotland, Highlands and Islands Enterprise, The Fort William Active Travel Group, West Highland Community Rail Partnership, Shiel Buses, Scottish Canals, NHS Highland, Fort William, Inverlochy and Torlundy CC, Caol CC, Kilmallie CC.

These groups meet 2-4 times per year and provide a two-way forum for discussing issues and projects within FW2040 and seeking solutions to any challenges to delivery. These groups address relevant issues as and when they arise, for example, over the coming 18 months they will provide a valuable forum for engagement on the Integrated Transport Plan work.

6 Priorities

6.1 In addition to the wider developments set out above, a summary of the priorities for the coming year for FW2040 is detailed here with more information on priorities i.-iii. provided in sections 6.2-6.4 below:-

- i. managing the Fort William town centre master planning work and instigating work to further the delivery and implementation of proposals, with a current focus on culture and leisure services and facilities, and the potential relocation of the bus station;
- ii. continued collaboration to help develop an Integrated Transport Plan (ITP) for Fort William as a core member of the ITP Client Delivery Group;
- iii. collaboration with the newly established Fort William Business Improvement District (BID) to co-ordinate and progress improvements in the town centre;
- iv. ongoing support and development of all projects on the FW2040 Masterplan; and
- v. further community consultation as to new projects to develop and include in the FW2040 Masterplan.

6.2 Fort William Town Centre Masterplan

6.2.1 The Fort William Town Centre Masterplan (FW TCMP) was commissioned by the Highland Council in partnership with Highlands and Islands Enterprise, and the Lochaber Chamber of Commerce and produced by Threesixty Architecture in January 2024.

6.2.2 The TCMP is a working document and presents a high-level vision for Fort William town centre rather than containing detailed specifications or plans. All proposals within the FW TCMP will therefore be subject to further stages of design and consultation e.g. through planning. Through the course of developing the FW TCMP, a programme of stakeholder consultation and community engagement has been undertaken by Threesixty and by FW2040. The results of this engagement and consultation process have informed the FW TCMP and its potential implementation. Full details can be found on the FW2040 webpages [here](#).

6.2.3 Currently, the focus for the commissioning partners is how to progress elements within the FW TCMP and which proposals to prioritise. Factors informing this consideration include community engagement and stakeholder feedback, site and building ownership, levels of development required, sources of funding, and commercial interest. It is likely that key funding opportunities will come through future Scottish or UK Government infrastructure programmes e.g. any successor to the current City Region Deal which is nearing its end.

6.2.4 Resources from FW2040 have been allocated towards prioritisation and implementation, and work is progressing on a shortlist of Masterplan proposals which can be taken through to feasibility. This directly contributes to 'Town Centre Revitalisation' which is a key FW2040 project. This includes work to identify funding and ensure continued community engagement where required.

6.2.5 The following Masterplan elements are currently being considered for progression:-

- i. the reconfiguration and potential delivery of new culture and leisure facilities;
- ii. the re-imagining of the bus station (as part of a new travel interchange at the Bus and Rail Station);
- iii. public realm improvements; and
- iv. development of the current Belford and former St Mary's school sites for residential/mixed use.

Further details are provided on i and ii below, and on iii in section 6.4.

6.2.6 Culture and Leisure Options Appraisal

The Fort William Town Centre Masterplan recommends a reconfiguration of culture and leisure provision in the town. This includes proposals for a new Events / Civic / Library space at the head of the High Street, a new Leisure Centre and Swimming Pool on the site of the current Nevis Centre, and a Watersports Centre on the West End Car Park. These suggestions were very well received during community engagement although not all the proposed locations are within public ownership. FW2040 is therefore currently looking at the potential to build on this initial work and undertake an options appraisal on leisure and cultural provision in the town. This may be extended to the wider Lochaber area if considered appropriate.

6.2.7 A study would explore the condition of current facilities and services within the context of the Masterplan proposals and the Highland Council's POD concept (Point of Delivery), to make recommendations for the best configuration going forward. This is likely to focus on key facilities comprising the Nevis Centre (leased by Linnhe Leisure), Lochaber Leisure Centre and Fort William Library (both operated by Highlife Highland). The exact division of facilities, locations, potential future demand, the practicalities of maintaining services/revenue streams by staging construction, and potential sources of funding all require careful consideration. Currently options for study funding are being explored.

6.2.8 Re-location/Re-imagination of the Bus Station

This project involves the proposal for a new bus station in Fort William located on the site of the current Nevis Terrace car park, adjacent to the A82. A new bus station at this location would circumvent the need for buses to travel via MacFarlane Way to the existing bus station location. Instead, the bus station would be directly accessible from the A82 at the A82 / Nevis Terrace / Middle Street junction, improving access for buses to and from the trunk road network whilst presenting the opportunity to improve the quality of the bus infrastructure. The long-distance coach network operates from the bus station and local services utilise Middle Street adjacent to High Street, the movement of the bus station would therefore bring different services closer together, enhance access for passenger transfer, and significantly improve the 'arrival' experience in Fort William.

6.2.9 An application has been submitted to Transport Scotland's new Bus Infrastructure Fund 2025/26 for feasibility and design costs for this project and is awaiting a decision.

6.3 Fort William Integrated Transport Plan

6.3.1 AECOM/Stantec have been commissioned to produce an Integrated Transport Plan (ITP) for Fort William. The study inception meeting took place in Fort William on the 25th June. The study is being funded by Transport Scotland, HITRANS and the Highland Council and delivers on the recommendation made in STPR2 under “32. *Trunk road and motorway renewal for reliability, resilience and safety*” to deliver an ITP for the town. HITRANS are leading on the procurement of the ITP supported by a client delivery group comprising Transport Scotland, the Highland Council including FW2040, and Highlands and Islands Enterprise.

6.3.2 The study will:-

- a) involve a review, proportionate refresh and validation of the evidence-base and findings of both the Fort William Strategic Transport Study: Case for Change (2018) and subsequent Preliminary Appraisal (2023) to confirm the challenges, issues and opportunities around transportation and travel in the town;
- b) undertake modelling including additional data collection where required;
- c) include stakeholder engagement and community consultation; and
- d) develop a Detailed STAG Appraisal of identified options. STAG comprises four key stages 1. Case for change, 2. Preliminary Appraisal, 3. Detailed Appraisal and 4. Post-Appraisal Evaluation, which are required as a robust evidence base for future funding and option delivery.

6.3.3 The review and detailed appraisal will inform the ITP which will be a comprehensive, multi-modal plan which will establish a proposed package of interventions, priorities, direction, responsibilities, funding sources and process for change for travel and transport in the town of Fort William. It is envisaged that the full study will take up to 18 months with delivery of the ITP projected for the end of 2026.

6.3.4 The key study deliverables are:-

- i. Inception Report;
- ii. Consultation and Engagement Strategy;
- iii. Refresh, Review and Validation Summary Note (including a data collection plan);
- iv. Detailed Options Appraisal Report;
- v. Monitoring and Evaluation Plan and a Benefits Blueprint;
- vi. Consultation and Engagement Summary Note; and
- vii. Fort William Integrated Transport Plan

6.3.5 ‘Road Improvements: STAG / STPR2’ is a key FW2040 project integral to the FW2040 Vision and theme of making the town ‘A Connected Place’. The challenges of travel and transport within and through the town have a direct impact on many other projects within the FW2040 Vision including the revitalisation of the town centre being pursued through the Town Centre Master-planning work. The production of the FWITP will deliver against this priority addressing the need to identify measures to reduce congestion on the A830 and A82 trunk road network.

6.3.6 Ongoing collaboration to help develop the Integrated Transport Plan for Fort William and support the consultants as a core member of the ITP Client Delivery Group will remain a key focus of the FW2040 project manager role going forward. FW2040 will also provide an important contact point for stakeholder engagement and community consultation.

6.4 Fort William BID

6.4.1 A ballot was held at the end of November 2024 where the proposal for a Business Improvement District (BID) for Fort William was approved. On 27 May 2025 a BID project manager was appointed to take forward the 5-year business plan for the town.

6.4.2 FW2040 met with the BID to discuss co-ordinating efforts within the town centre. There are a range of complementary aims with the FW TCMP around public realm improvements and projects and activities identified in the BID Business Plan e.g., a property improvement grant, and financial support for street improvements. Collaboration will be ongoing to ensure efforts are co-ordinated and maximum impact can be achieved.

6.4.3 More information on the BID including the full business plan can be found on the BID website [here](#).

Designation: Assistant Chief Executive - Place

Date: 16 July 2025

Author: Alison Martin, FW2040 Project Management

Background Papers: None

Appendices: Appendix 1 - FW2040 Annual Masterplan Project Update July 2025



FW2040 Annual Masterplan Project Update

July 2025

Alison Martin

FW2040 Project Manager

FW2040 Projects: Overview

The table below provides an update on progress with the projects currently on the FW2040 Masterplan. Following extensive consultation in 2018 and 2019, a Masterplan containing **31** projects in total (including sub projects under headings such as Active Travel) was produced. Each of these was designed to contribute to the overall FW2040 Vision for the town. A further **5** projects have since been added. The peak number of Masterplan projects to date has therefore been **36**.

The overview table on the next page lists all projects to date (completed, removed, and currently active). To date, **13** projects have been completed and **3** have been removed from the Masterplan (subject to review should circumstances change and they are deemed viable to progress in the future). There are therefore **20 projects** currently on the Masterplan (including those with multiple stages/phases). These can be broadly categorised as follows:

Category	Current FW2040 Masterplan Projects (20)
Completion imminent.	1. Blar Mor Phase 2 Housing – Stage 1: 61 units (Highland Council)
Works underway on site.	2. Nevis Forest Mountain Resort - Forest Land Scotland: Eco-cabins groundworks, internal roads and foundations (Forest Holidays) 3. Active Travel Audit - Delivery of Recommendations: various improvements ongoing
Planning, design or preparatory work being undertaken by FW2040 Board member organisations.	4. Road Improvements STAG/STPR2 - Integrated Transport Plan (HITRANS) 5. Town Centre Waterfront Enhancement (split between 8. and 11.) 6. New Hospital (NHS Highland)
Planning, design or preparatory work being undertaken by organisations external to the FW2040 Board.	7. Upper Achintore Community Facility - Cow Hill Hall (Upper Achintore Regeneration Group) 8. Cruise Ship Reception Facilities (Fort William Marina and Shoreline Community Interest Company) 9. Smelter Site Expansion (Alvance) 10. West Highland Museum Expansion (West Highland Museum Trust)
Requires next steps / feasibility review / funding applications.	11. Town Centre Revitalisation - Masterplan Delivery and Implementation (Various) 12. Blar Mor - Land Reserved for Community Use (Highland Council) 13. Indoor Multi-Purpose Facility (Nevis Centre/Leisure Centre. Linked to 11.) 14. Helicopter Landing Site (Various) 1. Blar Mor Phase 2 Housing - Stage 2: 70 units (LINK Housing)
Paused / ongoing monitoring.	15. Upper Achintore Housing - c. 270 Units. 16. STEM Centre (UHI NW+H) 17. Local Energy Network (Various) 18. High School Expansion - Extension to Lochaber High School Facilities (Highland Council) 19. Primary Schools - Extension to Fort William Primary Schools' Capacities (Highland Council) 20. Nevis Forest Mountain Resort - Nevis Range (Nevis Range)

FW2040 Master Plan Project Tracker		
All Masterplan Listed Projects to Date (35 peak total)	13 Completed (plus 3 Phased Developments) 3 Removed (post 2019)	Current 20 Projects on Masterplan @ January 2025 (2 added and in development post 2019)
Caol & Lochyside Flood Protection Scheme	Caol & Lochyside Flood Protection Scheme	
Nevis Forest Mountain Resort - Visitor Accommodation Nevis Range	Nevis Range Visitor Accommodation (Hotel)	
Town Centre Revitalisation - Cinema	Town Centre Revitalisation - Cinema	
Town Centre Revitalisation - Whisky Centre	Town Centre Revitalisation - Whisky Centre Housing	
Improved Internet Connection Speeds	Improved Internet Connection Speeds	
Soldiers Bridge upgrade	Soldiers Bridge upgrade	
Black Parks Active Travel Route	Black Parks Active Travel Route	
Thomas Telford Corpach Marina	Thomas Telford Corpach Marina	
Bike Carriage By Rail	Bike Carriage By Rail	
Blar Mor Housing - c. 250 units	Blar Mor Phase 1 Housing - 117 units	Blar Mor Phase 2 Housing - c. 120 units (Stage 1 - 61 units)
Upper Achintore Housing - c. 350 units	Upper Achintore Phase 1 Housing - 82 Units	Upper Achintore Housing - c. 270 units
STEM Centre		STEM Centre
New Hospital		New Hospital
Blar Mor - Land Reserved for Community Use		Blar Mor - Land Reserved for Community Use
Local Energy Networks		Local Energy Network
Town Centre Revitalisation - Redevelopment of Belford Site	Town Centre Revitalisation - Masterplan and Engagement	Town Centre Revitalisation - Masterplan Delivery and Implementation
Town Centre Waterfront - access, shoreline development and promenade		Town Centre Waterfront Enhancement
High School Expansion - Extension to Lochaber High School facilities		High School Expansion - Extension to Lochaber High School facilities
Smelter Site Expansion		Smelter Site Expansion
Upper Achintore Community Facility		Upper Achintore Community Facility
Primary Schools - extension to Fort William Primary Schools' capacities	Primary Schools - 2 classroom extension to Gaelic primary	Primary Schools - extension to Fort William Primary Schools' capacities
Indoor Multi Purpose Facility (Nevis Centre)		Indoor Multi Purpose Facility (Nevis Centre)
Cruise Ship Reception Facilities		Cruise Ship Reception Facilities
Nevis Forest Mountain Resort - Forest and Land Scotland		Nevis Forest Mountain Resort - Forest and Land Scotland
Nevis Forest Mountain Resort - Nevis Range		Nevis Forest Mountain Resort - Nevis Range
Fort William Active Travel Audit		Fort William Active Travel Audit - delivery of recommendations
Road Improvements STAG/ STPR2		Road Improvements STAG/STPR2 - Integrated Management Plan (ITP)
Helicopter Landing Site		Helicopter Landing Site
West Highland Museum Expansion		West Highland Museum Expansion
Former Secondary School Site (completed 2018 but subsequently included under FW2040)	Former Secondary School Site (completed 2018 but subsequently counted as a FW2040 achievement)	
Tweeddale and Lochaber House developments	Tweeddale and Lochaber House developments	
E-Bike scheme	E-Bike scheme	
Tailrace - Kayak Competition and Training Facility	Tailrace - Kayak Competition and Training Facility	
Corpach Port Expansion	Canal Related Tourism Projects	
Canal Related Tourism Projects	Corpach Port Expansion	
	KEY	
	Added post 2019	
	Projects Delivered	
	Initial phases delivered of Current Projects	
	Current Projects	
	Removed projects (but could be reincorporated)	



Active Projects Making Fort William A Great Place to Live

STEM Centre				
Date	Progress Reported	By Whom	Next Steps	Further Information
March 2025	The Full Business Case for a STEM centre located at Blar Mhor was approved by the Scottish Funding Council in 2018, subject to funding availability. Since that time, the opportunity to purchase and redevelop 2.5ha of land and buildings adjacent to the Fort William campus (land and buildings largely comprising the old Underwater Centre) has arisen. This has allowed a refresh of the STEM centre options appraisal. An Outline Business Case has been made for this campus development which would provide space for STEM, digital and construction training, and a 27-bed residence building thus capitalising and expanding on the success of courses and training already delivered whilst providing a physical link to assets such as the Advancing Manufacturing Centre and the loch.	Dave Campbell, Project Director for STEM	UHI NW+H to progress with ongoing updates to the FW2040 Project Manager for update to FW2040 Board.	To be provided as proposals develop.
New Hospital				
Date	Progress Reported	By Whom	Next Steps	Further Information
May 2025	Funding to progress the development of a new Belford hospital in Fort William was confirmed as part of the Scottish budget in Feb 2025. This was welcome news after a freeze for capital projects had stalled progress on the new hospital design. The design had been taken to RIBA Stage 2 (initial concept design) by contractors Balfour Beatty with the site for the new hospital at Blar Mhor safeguarded by Highland Council. Following the Scottish Government Budget announcement, funding has now	Karen-Anne Wilson, Lochaber District Manager and Emma Oates	NHS to progress with ongoing updates to the FW2040 Project Manager for update to FW2040 Board.	Scottish Budget: Funding for new Fort William hospital - BBC News Service model for new hospital NHS

	<p>been allocated to restart the project and bring it to Full Business Case (RIBA Stage 5). NHS Highland have confirmed the project formally restarted in the new financial year (April 2025). Current timescales are to submit the Outline Business Case in May 2026, the Full Business Case in July 2027, and for construction to begin in October 2027. The total project cost outlined in the Initial Agreement is £137.7 million, however cost and timescales will be subject to review as part of the restarted programme of works. In parallel an NHS redesign of health and social care is ongoing. This process includes the project for replacing the Belford Hospital but is also looking at wider service change throughout Lochaber.</p>	Belford Hospital Manager		Highland (scot.nhs.uk)
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Second phase housing - est. 120 Housing Units, Blar Mhor (Stage 1 - 61 units)

Date	Progress Reported	By Whom	Next Steps	Further Information
May 2025	<p>Phase 2 of housing on the Blar is under development. Work is ongoing to link this phase with the existing medical centre, the recently completed Phase 1 housing, and the new hospital. A preferred bus route has been made a condition of planning which provides a one-way link from the LHS T-junction to the roundabout. The mixed tenure homes in Phase 2 are due to be developed in three stages linked to the wider Blar development plans. Currently construction of the first of those stages is well underway which will see the delivery of 61 homes, due for completion July/Aug 2025. The residual stages will be developed in parallel with the hospital design and delivery programme (allowing incorporation of aspects such as key worker housing). Stage 2 and 3 will see 59 units projected for development (30 units in 2030/31 and 29 units in 2031/32).</p>	Helen Cameron, Housing Development Manager	HC to progress with ongoing updates to the FW2040 Project Manager for update to FW2040 Board.	

Land reserved for community use on Blar Mhor development

Date	Progress Reported	By Whom	Next Steps	Further Information
May 2025	<p>Approximately 2ha of the land owned by the Council at Blar Mhor is designated for Community Use within the approved Masterplan. The area has been prepared for development in</p>	Allan Maguire - Head of	HC to progress with ongoing updates to the FW2040 Project Manager	To be provided as proposals for use develop.

	terms of a building platform and is accessible from the existing road network - uses to be determined.	Development & Regeneration	for update to FW2040 Board.	
Local Energy Networks				
Date	Progress Reported	By Whom	Next Steps	Further Information
July 2024	Stage 1 assessment at Blar Mhor examined whether there could be sufficient demand and the number of end users who would use heat from any potential network. Plans to progress this to Stage 2 and asses the technical detail of potential heat generation/to demand have been put on hold reflecting varying progress in the component projects on the Blar. Specifically, developments with the STEM Centre (an original key driver for the LEN) and the decision to use air source heat pumps for the housing developments have changed the demand profile. It is considered likely that any further LEN investigations would need to be driven by an end user such as the NHS (in parallel to the development of the hospital) if considered appropriate.	Scott Dingwall, HIE	FW2040 Project Manager to keep a watching brief in collaboration with HIE on any future LEN developments.	To be provided as and when any proposals develop.
Town Centre Revitalisation - Masterplan Delivery and Implementation (includes re-development of Belford Site)				
May 2025	<p>The production of a Fort William Town Centre Masterplan and associated community engagement were completed over a period of several months in 2023/24. A <i>Design Team Response to Community Feedback</i> received on the Masterplan was published in January 2025. Building on this work the following Masterplan elements are being considered for progression as FW2040 priorities:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The reconfiguration and delivery of new culture and leisure facilities. • Development of the current Belford and former St Mary's school sites for residential/mixed use. • Leasing of the former Council service point for art, youth and/or co-working space • A new travel interchange at the Bus and Rail Station. • Public realm improvements. 	FW2040 Project Manager	An analysis of achievability and the identification of potential initial projects within the Masterplan is ongoing to evaluate which can progress to feasibility, options appraisal, or business case work. At appropriate stages this will require further community and stakeholder consultation.	Fort William Town Centre Masterplan Masterplan Appendices Community Feedback Design Team Response
Town Centre Waterfront - Enhancement of marine access, shoreline development and promenade				

Date	Progress Reported	By Whom	Next Steps	Further Information
June 2025	Waterfront improvements/proposed developments have been incorporated in the Town Centre Master-planning process detailed above. Specific plans developed by the Fort William Marina and Shoreline Community Interest Company (FWMSCIC) are detailed as a separate item below. The plans are currently illustrative but complementary.	FW2040 Project Manager	To maintain links between potential waterfront developments e.g., at the West End or Town Pier and the work on the Town Centre Masterplan.	To be provided as proposals develop.
High School Expansion - Extension to Lochaber High School facilities				
Date	Progress reported	By Whom	Next Steps	Further Information
June 2025	No work currently scheduled. Capacity is monitored annually as part of school roll forecasts.	HC Estates	HC to progress with ongoing updates to the FW2040 Project Manager for update to FW2040 Board.	To be provided as proposals develop.
Smelter Site Expansion				
Date	Progress Reported	By Whom	Next Steps	Further Information
Feb 2025	Plans for a new recycling facility and aluminium billet plant at Fort William smelter are in development by Alvanice Aluminium Group. Full planning permission was approved in September 2021. Work is currently underway on the detailed design of the plant and the refinement of its business case with the project awaiting final funding approval. A dedicated project team are working on site and continue to meet milestones for the project. It is anticipated that the development will lead to the creation of up to 45 direct jobs.	James Tangney, Lead Engineer	Alvanice to progress with ongoing updates to the FW2040 Project Manager for update to FW2040 Board.	The Future ALVANICE British Aluminium
Housing Units - Lundavra/ Upper Achintore- circa 350 Units				
Date	Progress Reported	By Whom	Next Steps	Further Information
June 2025	The first phase of the LINK housing project for Upper Achintore is now complete and has successfully delivered 82 affordable homes (Nov 24). This project aims to deliver up to 350 new homes in the Lundavra/upper Achintore area of town. Originally	Helen Cameron, Housing Development Manager	HC to progress with ongoing updates to the FW2040 Project Manager	The JR Group Delivers Transformative Rural Housing

	a second phase was expected to follow however funding has not yet been agreed due to a combination of development costs and funding availability and currently further phases are on hold.		for update to FW2040 Board.	Project for Upper Achintore in Fort William - The JR Group
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Upper Achintore Community Facility

Date	Progress Reported	By Whom	Next Steps	Further Information
June 2025	Successful collaboration between Voluntary Action Lochaber and the Upper Achintore Regeneration Group with support from Aeon Creative has secured HTSI funding for a 12-month digital campaign for 'Cow Hill Hall' – a proposed new community facility to serve upper Fort William. The campaign is designed to raise awareness and build capacity within the community to identify and support community members to drive the development forwards. A new community organisation is needed to take on the work already completed on a business plan and initial discussions around a land transfer. The campaign for Cow Hill Hall launched on the 29th May with a social media campaign and website www.Cowhillhall.com . A 12-month calendar of activities and workshops will run alongside the digital campaign.	Mark Linfield, Chair Upper Achintore Community Regeneration Group and Lyn Kirkpatrick, Voluntary Action Lochaber	UARG to progress with ongoing updates to the FW2040 Project Manager for update to FW2040 Board. Once a new group is identified and established the project needs taken forward to finalise the business case and identify capital funding.	Cow Hill Hall Get Involved — Cow Hill Hall

Primary Schools - Extension to Fort William Primary Schools' Capacities

Date	Progress Reported	By Whom	Next Steps	Further Information
June 2025	In May 2023 there was a confirmed expansion for the Gaelic primary school, Bun-Sgoil Ghaidhlig Loch Abar to cope with an increasing school role. Construction of an extension took place in the summer of 2024 and the school took possession of two new classrooms on 16th Sept. No other primary school work is currently scheduled. Capacity is monitored annually as part of school roll forecasts.	HC Estates	HC to progress with ongoing updates to the FW2040 Project Manager for update to FW2040 Board.	Robertson returns to Fort William's Gaelic School to undertake extension

Indoor Multi-Purpose Facility (Nevis Centre / Leisure Centre)

Date	Progress Reported	By Whom	Next Steps	Further Information
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June 2025	<p>The Fort William Town Centre Masterplan recommends a reconfiguration of culture and leisure provision in the town. This includes proposals for a new Events/Civic/Library space at the head of the high street, a new Leisure Centre and Swimming Pool on the site of the current Nevis Centre, and a Watersports Centre on the west end car park. These suggestions were very well received during community engagement.</p> <p>FW2040 is currently looking at the potential to build on this initial work and undertake a feasibility study/options appraisal on leisure and cultural provision in the town. This may be extended to the wider Lochaber area if considered appropriate. A study would explore the condition of current facilities and services within the context of the Masterplan proposals and the Highland Council's POD concept (Point of Delivery), to make recommendations for the best configuration going forward. The exact division of facilities, locations, potential future demand, the practicalities of maintaining services/revenue streams by staging construction, and potential sources of funding all require careful consideration. Currently options for study funding are being explored.</p>	<p>Chris Heardman, Nevis Centre Board Chair</p> <p>and</p> <p>Gary Davidson, Lochaber Leisure Centre Manager</p> <p>and</p> <p>FW2040 Project Manager</p>	<p>Re-development of the Nevis Centre / Leisure Centre is a key proposal in the Town Centre Masterplan and improvements to the Nevis Centre is a core FW2040 project.</p> <p>FW2040 Project Manager to progress discussions between HC, HIE, HLH and the NC to explore options for both facilities within the context of the Masterplan proposals.</p>	To be provided as proposals develop
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West Highland Museum - Expansion and Renovation

Date	Progress Reported	By Whom	Next Steps	Further Information
June 2025	<p>The West Highland Museum (WHM) is housed within a 19th C former bank building and is category B listed. This brings a range of challenges around accessibility, lack of space, and difficulties controlling the internal environment (humidity and temperature) which is needed to safely store and display many of the artefacts. The project proposals include renovating and expanding the museum into adjacent land and premises already owned. The project will create a modern fit-for-purpose visitor attraction and valuable historic and cultural resource allowing:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Improved display of artefacts currently in storage 	West Highland Museum Trustees	WHM Trustees to progress with ongoing updates to the FW2040 Project Manager for update to FW2040 Board	Expansion plans at the West Highland Museum

	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Provide more opportunities for education, exhibition, art, study and historic research• Expand the retail offering• Ensure an efficient museum building which is accessible• Provide an improved facility for local communities and visitors alike. <p>A bid to the National Lottery Heritage Fund in Nov 2024 for the detailed design and capital build was unfortunately unsuccessful. The Trustees are however continuing with the project and looking at how elements can be phased. To this end, planning permission is currently being sought to partially demolish an old dairy building behind the museum so the extension can be built. Trustees hope to secure £4.5M of funding for the redevelopment project.</p>			
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Active Projects Making Fort William A Place Facing Water

Cruise Ship Reception Facilities - Ongoing Monitoring				
Date	Progress Reported	By Whom	Next Steps	Further Information
May 2025	Pontoons installed and extended by FWMSCIC to enable cruise ships to come to Fort William - have been operational since 2023. These enable overnight berthing for small, local, and visiting boats and vessels. FWMSCIC have provided sheltering facilities in the West End Car Park and have been successful in securing a 5-year lease to provide a toilet, shower and office block. Installation of these is nearing completion. This unit is a mobile design so can be re-located should future developments require. A feasibility study examining potential options for the development of expanded marina facilities on the waterfront was completed in 2024. This looked at the potential availability of Coire Glass rock extract. Engineering options for Coire Glass are still under review although recent discussion indicate SSE plan to use as much excavated rock on-site as possible should the development go ahead.	Sarah Kennedy, FWMSCIC	FW2040 Project Manager to ensure links with the wider Town Centre Masterplan work (see the separate Masterplan item above) for update to the Board.	Fort William Marina & Shoreline Community Interest Company - Home (fwmsc.co.uk)

Active Projects Making Fort William A Connected Place

Nevis Forest Mountain Resort - Forest and Land Scotland				
Date	Progress Reported	By Whom	Next Steps	Further Information
June 2025	The main focus of FLS work under the Nevis Forest and Mountain Resort Masterplan has been to work with Forest Holidays on their development of 50 forest eco-cabins. Groundworks, foundations and the internal road layout are under construction. The other elements of the masterplan: a hotel and low impact accommodation are on hold until the Forest Holidays development is complete, and market conditions are in a place to ensure the best outcomes for Lochaber. The potential for further recreational improvements will also follow on the back of the Forest Holiday development.	Robbie Layden, Regional Visitor Services Manager, Forestry and Land Scotland	Forest cabin lease agreement imminent with recreational improvements long term. FLS to progress with ongoing updates to the FW2040 Project Manager for update to FW2040 Board.	https://forestryandland.gov.scot/images/corporate/pdf/nevis-forest-and-mountain-resort-masterplan.pdf
Nevis Forest Mountain Resort - Nevis Range				
Date	Progress Reported	By Whom	Next Steps	Further Information
June 2024	Work began in October 2021 on a £4M project at Nevis Range expected to create up to 50 new full and part time jobs. A key component is the creation of new visitor accommodation and in April 2023 a 26 room the 'Base Camp' hotel opened. A new bar and restaurant, bike shop, retail shop, and a covered courtyard with event space have also opened plus a 100-seat capacity conference and training facility. In addition to the availability of overnight car parking for self-contained vehicles in the main car park, a purpose-built Campervan Park with 15 pitches also opened in 2024 offering electrical hook up connections and waste disposal facilities.	Chris O'Brien, Managing Director, Nevis Range Mountain Experience	Nevis Range to progress with ongoing updates to the FW2040 Project Manager for update to FW2040 Board.	https://www.nevisrange.co.uk/accommodation/hotel/

Fort William Active Travel Audit				
Date	Progress Reported	By Whom	Next Steps	Further Information
May 2025	<p>Active Travel improvements continue to be undertaken in line with the Active Travel Masterplan for the town which was refreshed in 2019. Current works include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Junction upgrades at Kilmallie Rd, Glen Loy St, and Lundavra Rd for wheeled access. New footpath link at Upper Achintore (Angus Cr to Aspen). Ongoing discussions with Roy Bridge community group for a path between Spean Bridge and Roy Bridge. <p>There are four bus infrastructure projects currently submitted to a new Bus Infrastructure Fund with funding decisions pending. These include:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Blar Mhor bus gate - subject to landowner/tenant agreement. Upper Achintore bus gate – subject to developer agreement. A82 right-hand bus lane turning design and modelling - HC to manage on behalf of Transport Scotland. Fort William Bus Station Reimagining. 	<p>Julie Cromarty, Team Leader Sustainable Transport</p> <p>and</p> <p>Vikki Trelfer- HITRANS</p>	<p>HC and HITRANS to progress with ongoing updates to the FW2040 Project Manager for update to FW2040 Board.</p>	<p>Fort William Active Travel Masterplan Refresh (2019)</p>
Road Improvements: STAG/STPR2				
Date	Progress Reported	By Whom	Next Steps	Further Information
July 2025	<p>Following a successful tendering process AECOM / Stantec have been commissioned to produce an Integrated Transport Plan (ITP) for Fort William. In accordance with the recommendations of STPR2 from 2022. A project inception meeting with project lead HITRANS plus Transport Scotland, the Highland Council including FW2040, and Highlands and Islands Enterprise (comprising the study Client Delivery Group - CDG), and AECOM / Stantec took place on the 25th June in Fort William. The first stage of the work will be delivery of an inception report and agreed programme of works including finalised timetabling. This will be followed by a</p>	<p>Neil MacRae, Partnerships Manager, HITRANS</p> <p>and</p> <p>FW2040 Project Manager</p>	<p>Updates on the ITP to be provided as a separate item at Board meetings while the work is ongoing.</p> <p>Updates to be provided by the FW2040 Project Manager for update to FW2040 Board.</p>	<p>Strategic Transport Projects Review 2 Transport Scotland</p>

	review, revalidation and refresh of all the transport appraisal work undertaken in Fort William to date.			
Helicopter Landing Site – Fort William				
Date	Progress Reported	By Whom	Next Steps	Further Information
July 2025	A suitable location for a permanent site for a helicopter landing site (HLS) to be utilised for Air Ambulance and Search and Rescue has been ongoing for several years. NHS have confirmed they will not build a landing site as part of the new hospital. A possible permanent site has been identified in the Glen Nevis area and partners headed by the Lochaber Mountain Rescue Team are progressing investigations with Jahama Estates and the HELP appeal. Discussions with Breedon (the new site owners of the current landing site at Carr's Corner) have been positive with regards to allowing Bristow to continue landing there in the short-term giving continuity until a new site is operational.	Dot Ferguson, HC Senior Community Development Manager	HC to progress with ongoing updates to the FW2040 Project Manager for update to FW2040 Board.	To be provided as proposals for use develop.



Completed Projects Making Fort William A Great Place to Live

Town Centre Revitalisation – Master-planning and Engagement			
Date	Summary	Next Steps	Further Information
Jan 2025	<p>The production of a Fort William Town Centre Masterplan and associated community engagement were completed over a period of several months in 2023/24. A <i>Design Team Response to Community Feedback</i> received on the Masterplan was published in January 2025. Building on this work the following Masterplan elements are being considered for progression:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The reconfiguration and delivery of new culture and leisure facilities • Development of the current Belford and former St Mary's school sites for residential/mixed use • Leasing of the former Council service point for art, youth and/or co-working space • A new travel interchange at the Bus and Rail Station • Public realm improvements. 	<p>Project complete - no further reporting envisaged. Implementation and delivery of the Masterplan including prioritisation of proposals is ongoing (see Active Projects).</p>	<p>Fort William Town Centre Masterplan Masterplan Appendices Community Feedback Design Team Response</p>
First Phase House - 82 Housing Units Lundavra/Upper Achintore			
Date	Summary	Next Steps	Further Information
Nov 2024	<p>The first phase of the LINK housing project for Upper Achintore is now complete and has successfully delivered 82 affordable homes. Further phases and a programme of works for more housing are yet to be agreed.</p>	<p>Project complete - no further reporting envisaged. Future phases of Housing are a separate item (see Active Projects)</p>	<p>Landmark Housing Project Complete In Fort William Scotland Construction News</p>
Primary Schools - 2 classroom extension to Gaelic primary			
Date	Summary	Next Steps	Further Information

Sept 2024	In May 2023 there was a confirmed expansion for the Gaelic primary school, Bun-Sgoil Ghaidhlig Loch Abar to cope with an increasing school role. Construction of an extension took place in the summer of 2024 and the school took possession of two new classrooms on 16th Sept 2024.	Project complete - no further reporting envisaged. Future primary school projects are a separate item (see Active Projects).	
Caol & Lochyside Flood Protection Scheme			
Date	Summary	Next Steps	Further Information
Dec 2023	Flood protection works are complete and official scheme opening took place on 31 st August 2023. Some limited remedial works are being completed this year.	Project complete - no further reporting envisaged.	Caol and Lochyside flood protection scheme Flood alleviation schemes The Highland Council
First Phase Housing - 117 Housing Units Blar Mhor			
Completed	Summary	Next Steps	Further Information
Nov 2023	Phase 1 of housing on the Blar is complete with 117 homes delivered.	Project complete - no further reporting envisaged. Phase 2 of housing is a separate item (see Active Projects).	
Nevis Forest Mountain Resort - Additional Visitor Accommodation (Hotel and Campervan Facilities)			
Completed	Summary	Next Steps	Further Information
Apr 2023	Development of a hotel with 24 bedrooms, bar and restaurant, bike shop, gift shop and covered courtyard with an event space completed. A 15-pitch campervan park with electrical hook up connections and waste disposal facilities also completed with facilities opened in April 2023.	Monitor position with regard to Forest Holidays log cabin development which is a separate item (see Active Projects).	Developing for the future at Nevis Range! - Nevis Range Nevis Range Campervan Park in Fort William, Highlands - book online now (campsites.co.uk)
Town Centre Revitalisation - Tweeddale House & Lochaber House Re-development			
Completed	Summary	Next Steps	Further Information
Oct 2022	Tweeddale House and Lochaber House re-developments creating 37 new town centre flats in total, completed in October 2022.	Project complete - no further reporting envisaged.	https://www.highland.gov.uk/news/article/10349/tweeddale_tenants_revitalise_fort_william_town_centre
Improved Internet Connection Speeds			
Completed	Summary	Next Steps	Further Information
Mar 2022	Through the Building Digital UK (BDUK) Local Full Fibre Networks (LFFN) programme Fort William benefitted from full fibre connections	Monitor further opportunities for expansion	Public sector and business to benefit from new multi-million-

	being provided to public buildings. HIE funding secured additional benefits by also connecting Banavie Primary School, which provided an opportunity to support businesses in Banavie and Corpach and ensured the fibre optic link could be bridged across the canal to Lochaber High School. This was part of a wider four-year LFFN project across Inverness, Fort William, Thurso, and Wick completed on the 9th March 2022.		pound full fibre broadband investment The Highland Council
Town Centre Revitalisation - Highland Cinema			
Completed	Summary	Next Steps	Further Information
Sept 2020	The two-screen cinema with café and bar opened in September 2020 in Cameron Square. Screen 1 has a capacity of 109, with screen 2 having a capacity of 62. Café/ bar area seats 84, with an outdoor covered terrace overlooking the square. The Cinema is well used for a range of screenings and presentations and on the 23rd November 2023, Highland Cinema was named 'UK Cinema of the Year' at the 'Big Screen Awards' ceremony held in London.	Project complete - no further reporting envisaged.	Our Story - The Highland Cinema
Town Centre Revitalisation - Whisky Centre Housing Development			
Completed	Summary	Next Steps	Further Information
Nov 2019	Project complete with twelve flats for affordable rent constructed. First tenants moved into Macbrayne Apartments in November 2019.	Project complete - no further reporting envisaged.	Kearney Donald Partnership Macbrayne Apartments, Fort William (kd-partnership.co.uk)
Town Centre Revitalisation - Former Fort William Secondary and Primary School Sites			
Completed	Summary	Next Steps	Further Information
September 2018	Re-development of derelict site at entrance to town the location of the former Fort William High School and Fort William Primary. The renovated buildings now host the Highland Council and HIE offices, Lochaber Archive Centre, Jobcentre Plus, Highland Council service point and registration office.	Project complete - no further reporting envisaged.	Highland council takes up residence in new home Robertson



Completed Projects Making Fort William **A Place Facing Water**

Corpach Canal Entrance Marina (Thomas Telford Corpach Marina) - 40 Berth Marina			
Completed	Summary	Next Steps	Further Information
Apr 2023	The 45-berth facility was opened on 18 April 2023 and includes parking, café and showering facilities.	Monitor opportunities to support potential development of water taxis and any other ways the marina can contribute to the FW2040 Vision.	https://www.corpachmarina.co.uk/



Completed Projects Making Fort William A Connected Place

Bike Carriage by Rail - local use of rail coaches that can accommodate bikes			
Date	Progress Reported	Next Steps	Further Information
May 2023	ScotRail ran the first of its Highland Explorer carriages, with 20 cycle spaces (a UK first), on the Mallaig branch of the West Highland Line on the 19 April 2023. The class 153 carriages operate on two services each day - the early morning service from Mallaig to Glasgow Queen Street and the evening Glasgow Queen Street to Mallaig. Northbound services run Mon-Fri while south bound run Tue-Sat. The carriages mean customers benefit from 15% more seats, more luggage space and access to an additional toilet on board. The carriages also feature table maps detailing the route, with recommendations on where to walk, cycle and visit. Scotrail have also removed the additional charge for its Highland Explorer ticket. Customers can now purchase a Highland Explorer ticket for the price of a standard class fare. For the UCI Cycling Championships there were an additional three return trips put on using class 153 carriages.	Project complete - no further reporting envisaged.	ScotRail Highland Explorer ScotRail
Black Parks Improved Active Travel Connection			
Date	Progress Reported	Next Steps	Further Information
Oct 2022	Improvement works complete across the Black Parks, including surfacing and drainage improvements, turning areas, footpath work to rear of Ben Nevis Hotel, traffic bollards, street lighting, signage.	Improvements to the connections at either end of the Black Parks route - through Inverlochy from Railway Station and onward through Caol (this will be addressed by the flood defence works).	HiBike (hi-bike.co.uk) HITRANS - Highlands and Islands Transport Partnership Spaces for People: Making essential travel and exercise safer during Covid -19 The Highland Council
Active Travel - Hi Bikes			

Date	Progress Reported	Next Steps	Further Information
Apr 2022	HIBIKE Fort William Scheme launched in April 2022. In its first year of operation, between 4th April 2022 and 3rd April 2023, the Hi-Bikes had been ridden a total of 28,689 miles on 9068 rides. Ongoing monitoring of usage is currently undertaken by Lochaber Environmental Group.	Explore opportunities to expand number of bikes and docking stations. See update provided as part of Active Travel item.	HiBike (hi-bike.co.uk)
Soldier's Bridge - Improved Active Travel Connection Across River Lochy			
Date	Progress reported	Next Steps	Further Information
Aug 2018	The Soldiers Bridge re-opened to the public in August 2018, following the completion of a £560,000 renovation. The two-year project was delivered by Highland Council with funding from Transport Scotland through Sustrans Scotland's National Cycle Network Development Fund. It saw the replacement of the bridge deck and handrails as well as the northern and southern ramps. The improvements mean the bridge is now fully accessible to all users, and it is intended the upgrades will make it easier and safer for residents and visitors to explore the local area. Bridge lighting was subsequently delivered with HITRANS as part of the Caol & Lochyside Flood Protection Scheme community benefit works.	Project complete - no further actions envisaged.	Soldiers Bridge re-opens to public The Highland Council