The Highland Council

Agenda Item	**7**
Report No	**ECI/28/25**

Committee: **Economy and Infrastructure**

Date: **21 August 2025**

Report Title: **Sustainable Transport Team Update**

Report By: **Assistant Chief Executive – Place**

1 Purpose/Executive Summary

1.1 This report provides Members with a comprehensive update on the activities undertaken by the Highland Council's Sustainable Transport Team. Significant progress has been made in advancing a range of active and sustainable travel initiatives alongside the delivery of targeted road safety projects across the region. The team has also successfully secured additional external funding through national programmes to support the ongoing development and implementation of infrastructure that enables the transition to low-carbon transport solutions.

1.2 The paper outlines key achievements from 2024/25, highlights current project milestones, and sets out upcoming priorities. Strategic focus areas include the expansion of cycling and walking networks, improved integration of public transport services and continued investment in Sustainable Transport infrastructure. Members are invited to note the progress to date and endorse the proposed direction of travel, including sustained investment and collaborative working to deliver accessible, inclusive, and low-emission transport options for communities across the Highland area.

2 Recommendations

2.1 Members are asked to:-

i. **Note** the progress made by the Sustainable Transport Team in delivering active and sustainable transport and road safety initiatives across the Highland area;

ii. **Note** the progress made to the 2020 national road casualty reduction targets;

iii. **Agree** the successful securing of external funding to support low-carbon transport infrastructure and associated programme delivery; and

iv. **Endorse** the continued delivery of active and sustainable transport and road safety initiatives aligned with the Council's strategies and national priorities.

3 Implications

3.1 **Resource** – The delivery of sustainable transport projects is supported through a combination of internal staffing resources and external funding secured from national bodies such as Transport Scotland, Sustrans, and the Scottish Government's active travel and low-carbon transport programmes. While some core staff costs are met from existing Council budgets, the scale and ambition of project delivery are increasingly reliant on the successful acquisition of external grant funding. There are ongoing pressures on internal capacity to manage and deliver a growing portfolio of projects, particularly in relation to design, community engagement, procurement, and reporting requirements. Continued investment in staffing and specialist support will be essential to maintain momentum and maximise drawdown of external funds. Any future expansion of the programme may require further consideration of resource allocation to ensure delivery remains effective and compliant with funding conditions.

3.2 **Legal** – There are no direct legal implications arising from this report. However, all active and sustainable transport projects delivered by the Council must comply with relevant statutory requirements, including those related to procurement, health and safety, road traffic regulations, and equalities legislation.

3.3 **Risk** – There are a number of risks associated with the delivery of sustainable transport projects, including potential delays to funding awards (ATIF Tier 2 and Bus Infrastructure Fund), procurement challenges, contractor availability, adverse weather, and community or stakeholder objections. Failure to deliver projects within agreed timescales may result in the loss of external funding as well as reputational impacts for the Council.

3.4 **Health and Safety (risks arising from changes to plant, equipment, process, or people)** – There are no direct health and safety implications arising from this report. However, all sustainable transport projects will be delivered in accordance with relevant health and safety legislation and best practice, including the Construction (Design and Management) Regulations 2015 (CDM) where applicable.

3.5 **Gaelic** – There are no significant Gaelic implications arising directly from this report. However, in line with the Council's Gaelic Language Plan, the Sustainable Transport Team will continue to incorporate bilingual signage and materials in relevant projects where appropriate.

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 Sustainable Transport Team Activity 2024/25

5.1 **Appendix 1** presents the first iteration of an annual newsletter intended to inform Members of the key activities and achievements of the Sustainable Transport Team. The newsletter highlights projects delivered through a combination of The Highland Council's Capital Programme, UK Shared Prosperity Funding and external funding secured from Transport Scotland's Active Travel Infrastructure Fund (ATIF) and Sustrans.

Notable projects featured include the completion of the Kingussie Spey Street Junction Improvements, Riverside Way active travel route, Dunballoch to Cabrich link, Raigmore Bus Gate, and the Torvean Mobility Hub. The newsletter also outlines several road safety improvement initiatives including public consultation undertaken in advance of the region-wide 20mph speed limit rollout.

5.2 Funding spent on Sustainable Travel initiatives in 2024/25

- Transport Scotland ATIF Tier 1 – £1,213,000;
- Transport Scotland ATIF Tier 2 – £0 (funding awarded in 2025/26);
- THC Capital – £874,258.24;
- Safer Routes to School Capital – £46,000;
- UKSPF – £499,581.52;
- Transport Scotland Behaviour Change Fund – £187,800;
- Sustrans Places for Everyone – £ 2,129,837; and
- Road Safety Improvement Fund – £839,133 (TBC);

- Total – £5,789,609.76

6 Active Travel (Walking, Wheeling and Cycling) Infrastructure 2025/26

6.1 ATIF Tier 1

Direct award to Local Authorities (LAs) to support the delivery of active travel infrastructure projects. 2025 / 26 Programme:-

Caithness	**Location**	**Improvement Scheme**
Keiss	A99 High Street	Speed Cushions, Raised Lights Controlled Crossing
Wick Newton Park	West Banks Avenue	Cycling Boulevard Improvements
Pennyland	Trostan Road	School Street Zone
Reay	A836	Footpath and Crossing Improvements
Sutherland		
Farr High/Primary	Achneiskich Road	Pedestrian Improvements on single track route
Skye and Ross & Cromarty		
Avoch	A832/Long Road Junction	Junction Narrowing, Footpath and Crossing Improvements

Conon Bridge	Settlement Wide	Dropped kerbs, footpaths, junction narrowings
Dingwall	Dochcarty Road	Dropped kerb improvements
Evanton	Drummond Road	Raised Table Crossing Point
Lochcarron	A896	Safety Improvements at School
Ullapool	Various Locations	Raised Table, Footpath and Crossing Improvements
Muir of Ord to Maryburgh	Route	Feasibility study of route in sections and develop initial designs
Plockton	Innes Street/Railway Bridge	Lights Controlled Pedestrian Crossing, Pedestrian Improvements
Inverness	**Location**	**Improvement Scheme**
Bun-Sgoil Ghàidhlig Inbhir Nis	A8082 Sir Walter Scott Drive	Part Time 20mph Limit
Drakies	Mason Road / Old Edinburgh Road Junction	Junction narrowing and crossing improvements
Culloden	Moray Park Avenue	Potential Crossing Improvement Investigation Work
Merkinch	Kessock Road	Footpath Construction
City Centre	Millburn Road	Cycle / Pedestrian Safety Improvements
Ness Castle	Brodie Road	Raised Table Crossing Point
Smithton	Smithton Park/Murray Road	Raised Table Extension, Pedestrian Crossing Investigation
West of the Ness	Dalneigh/Ballifeary Area	Active Travel Design Works
Culduthel	Culduthel Road / Balloan Road	Junction Improvement Scheme
Nairn and Badenoch & Strathspey		
Kingussie	B970	Quiet Route
Glentruim	C1137	Quiet Route
Lochaber		
Duror	Cuil Bay,	Quiet Route
Bun-Sgoil Ghàidhlig Loch Abar	Kilmallie Road/Ardgour Road/School Grounds	Cycle Storage, Speed reduction measures

6.2 ATIF Tier 2 – Wick High Street

The Wick High Street Improvement Project is a key initiative led by the Council's Project Design Unit with support from the Sustainable Transport Team and is part of the Highland Investment Plan. A total of £2,165,000 in funding has been secured through Tier 2 of the Active Travel Infrastructure Fund, managed by Transport Scotland, to enhance pedestrian and active travel infrastructure in Wick town centre, specifically along Bridge Street and High Street. At the Bridge Street / High Street junction, the proposed works include the installation of raised pedestrian crossings and tactile paving, the provision of advanced stop lines for cyclists, widened footways, and upgrades to traffic signals including revised equipment and timing adjustments. The one-way lane from Bridge Street into the pedestrian zone will also be closed to vehicles. Within the High Street pedestrian zone, the vehicle path will be realigned and narrowed and complemented by the addition of public artworks, street furniture, planting, and green space at the eastern end. Further improvements include enhancement of the area at the top of the Market Square, installation of cycle parking throughout the zone, and new wayfinding signage to support accessibility and encourage active travel.

6.3 ATIF Tier 2 – Culbokie Active Travel Village

Following many years of community engagement and strong local support, the Sustainable Transport Team is pleased to confirm that £1,422,000 in funding has been secured from Tier 2 of the Active Travel Infrastructure Fund to enable the delivery of the Culbokie Active Travel Village project which is also part of the Highland Investment Plan. This significant investment will support the enhancement of active travel infrastructure throughout the village, creating a safer, more accessible, and inclusive environment for walking and cycling. Key elements of the scheme include the widening of existing footways, the creation of new footways and the construction of a 3.0-metre-wide shared use path on both sides of the road connecting the two parts of the village. Additional improvements include junction upgrades near the sports field, installation of visual narrowing treatments, enhancements to the school crossing and raised tables at key locations by the shop and school junctions. The existing chicane between the two village sections will be converted to a zebra crossing, while dropped kerbs and extended street lighting will further improve accessibility and safety within the new 20mph zone. The project also includes landscaping improvements and footway widening at the old village pump to address long-standing issues related to pavement parking.

6.4 THC Capital Funding

The Highland Council's Capital Budget is supporting the enhancement and expansion of walking, wheeling, and cycling infrastructure within communities across the region. Key projects currently underway or in development include:

Thurso - The Mall footpath has been widened and resurfaced, with park access relocated from the A9 to Janet Street to improve pedestrian safety. Ongoing Active Travel improvements in Thurso include design work to upgrade the Lovers Lane to Ormlie Road junction, building on footpath enhancements completed on Ormlie Road in 2024/25.

Fort William - Accessibility improvements will enhance road crossing infrastructure and footways at the Glenloy Street and Kilmallie Road junction in Caol. In Upper Achintore, a track between Angus Crescent and Neil Clark Way will be resurfaced to a shared-use standard.

Inverness - Infrastructure upgrades will be implemented in Merkinch, including footway improvements on Grant Street, Pumpgate Street, Lower Kessock Street, and Upper Kessock Street to improve access to local services. Additionally, the footpath between Bught Road and Bught Lane will be widened and resurfaced to extend the high-quality cycling route from the Riverside to the West Link and Canal.

Fortrose - A design review is being undertaken to explore and deliver accessibility improvements on Fortrose High Street.

Wider Region - Design work is progressing at various locations to develop project proposals aligned with Active Travel Masterplans. These designs aim to ensure projects are construction-ready for future implementation or funding opportunities.

6.5 **UK Shared Prosperity Fund**

The Active Travel Team has secured £435,000 from the UK Shared Prosperity Fund (UKSPF) to support the delivery of key active travel projects across the region in the current financial year. The funding will contribute to the following initiatives:

Inverness - Upgrades will be made to footpaths between Old Edinburgh Road and Harris Road, and between Smithton Road and Barn Church Road. These paths will be brought up to shared-use standard, with enhanced accessibility at bus stops and the installation of new street lighting. These projects will be jointly funded by UKSPF and £200,000 from the Active Travel Capital Budget.

Wick - Accessibility improvements will be carried out on Willowbank Road and Broadhaven Road. These works will include the installation of new dropped kerbs and tactile paving at junctions, along with footway resurfacing to improve safety and accessibility for all users.

Highland-wide - A feasibility study will be undertaken to identify potential sites for the development of Mobility Hubs to support integrated, sustainable transport options.

6.6 **Active Travel Officer for Skye and Raasay**

A new two-year fixed-term post, part funded through the Community Regeneration Fund, has been established to support the development of active and sustainable transport projects across the Isle of Skye and Raasay. The post is funded to deliver on key priorities identified in the Integrated Transport Action Plan for Skye, the Active Travel Masterplan for Portree, and the Options Appraisal for Active Travel on Skye. The appointed Project Officer will also play a central coordinating role in progressing active travel infrastructure priorities identified through the Skye and Raasay Futures (SARF) initiative. To advance these projects, the Project Officer will work collaboratively with a wide range of public sector partners, including HITRANS and Transport Scotland as well as with local community organisations such as Community Companies and Trusts. The role will focus on developing and delivering infrastructure schemes, identifying new opportunities for active travel, and improving access to public transport and sustainable travel options across the region.

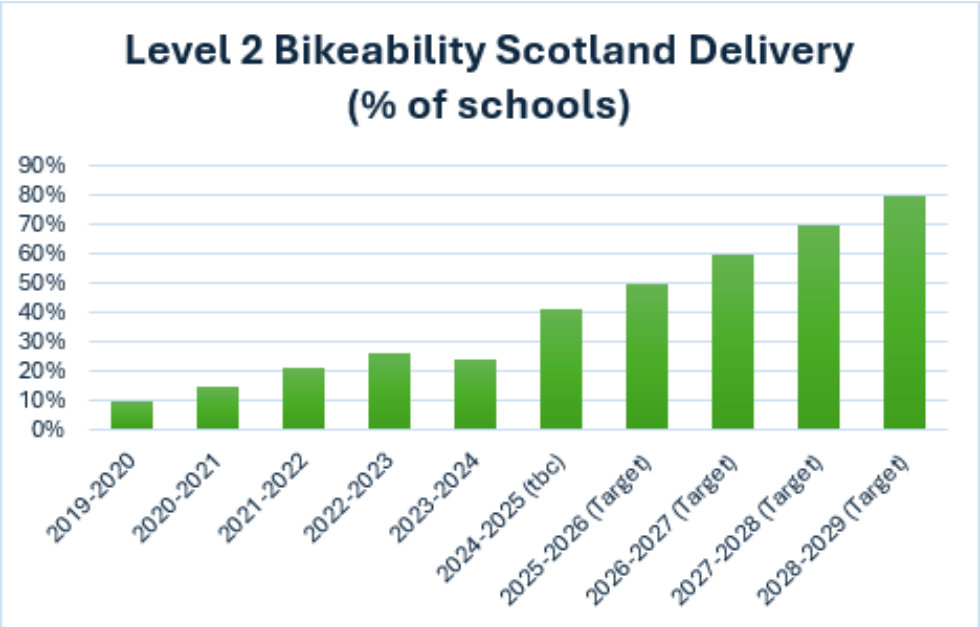
6.7 **Transport Scotland Funded Behaviour Change Initiative**

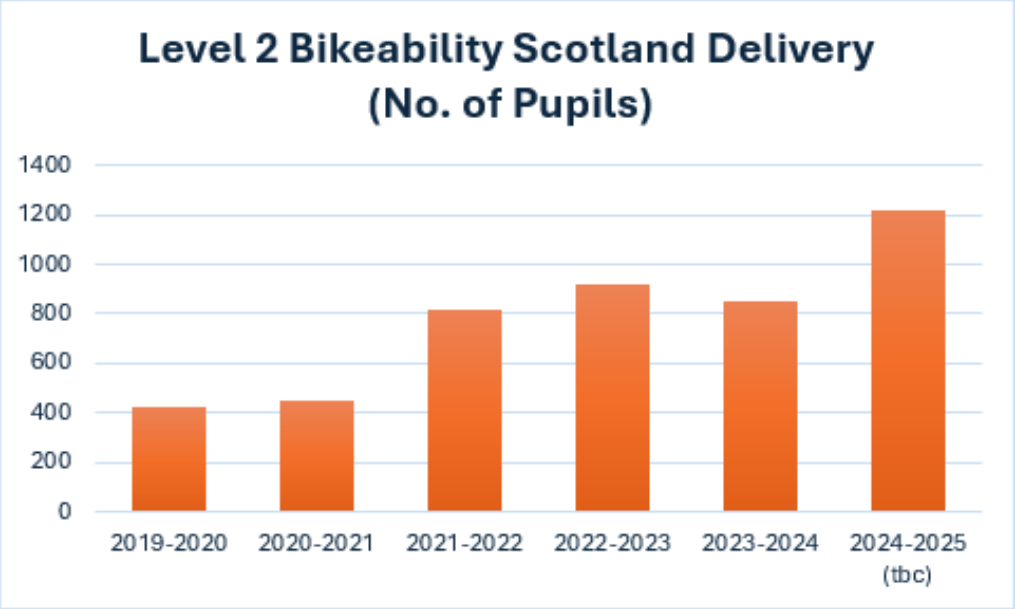
The first of our Sustainable Transport Behaviour Change Officer's is now in post and he has been continuing to support several initiatives in Caithness including the Noss Primary School Bike Train which regularly attracts over 100 pupils, staff and parents, the Newton Park Primary School walking train which regularly attracts 100 plus walkers and the Pulteneytown Peoples Project bike hub which repairs and saves unloved bikes from the dump and recycles them back into the community.

Three other Behaviour Change Officers covering Nairn; Badenoch and Strathspey; Ross and Cromarty; Inverness; Lochaber and Skye and Lochalsh will be starting with the team in July. Their roles will be to develop and implement targeted behaviour-change programmes to shift travel habits toward walking, cycling, scooting and public transport. They will also plan and deliver Bikeability sessions for school-age children and work closely with schools, employers, local communities and internal Council teams to promote and support road safety education, active and sustainable travel.

The Highland Council were successful in bidding for funding to employ two full-time, fixed-term and eight casual Bikeability Instructors to support delivery across Highland primary schools in academic year 2024-2025. Delivery of Level 2 on road training has been the focus of their work and alongside our valued trained volunteers and members of school staff, they have increased delivery rates significantly over previous years. In academic year 2024-2025, Level 2 on road training was delivered with 41% of primary schools taking part, which equates to 1216 of pupils receiving this vital life skill. Additional to this, Highland Council instructors helped 20 pupils learn to ride, with feedback from pupils and parents being highly positive.

Funding is being sought from Cycling Scotland for academic year 2025-2026 to support delivery of Level 2 on road training, increase the number of casual instructors employed and to create a formal Learn to Ride programme. For this coming year, the Council's Bikeability Coordinator will be taking on coordination of Play on Pedals from the Education Team; Play on Pedals is a cycling programme for the Council's Early Years settings. Funding will be sought from Cycling Scotland to support the continuation of this programme.





7 Road Safety Initiatives 2025/26

7.1 The Highland Council has a statutory duty, under the Road Traffic Act 1991, to prepare and carry out a programme of measures designed to promote Road Safety.

7.2 The cost in suffering and economic terms caused by road accidents is enormous and the human cost of a life simply cannot be valued. In Great Britain in 2023, the average cost of each Fatality was £2,597,781, each serious casualty was £321,719 and each slight casualty was £32,945. The estimated total cost of all injury road accidents in Scotland in 2023 was £1,017.1m – (Reported Road Casualties Scotland 2022)

7.3 As detailed in the Highland Council Road Safety Plan Highland Council is working towards achieving the road casualty reduction targets set out in Scotland's Road Safety Framework to 2030.

The Casualty Reduction Target Structure in Scotland is as follows:-

The Interim Targets to 2030 (based on the 2014-18 baseline):-

- 50% reduction in people killed;
- 50% reduction in people seriously injured;
- 60% reduction in children; and
- 60% reduction in children (aged <16) seriously injured (aged <16) killed

Appendix 2 details the casualty statistics for Highland, and the progress being made, in relation to the 2014-2018 baseline in order to achieve the Scottish Government 2030 interim national targets. These figures are from both 'Reported Road Casualties Scotland 2022' and Highland Council's own Collision Database which uses Police Scotland's CRaSH statistics. Figures included both the Local Authority and Trunk Road network.

Highland Council's Road Safety Team are responsible for managing the Council's Road Collision Data System and utilising the data to ensure any clusters or areas of concern are identified. They are also responsible for undertaking Collision Investigation on all Fatal Road Crashes that take place on the Local Authority Road Network. This work is key in the drive towards reducing collision on Highland's roads.

7.4 Highland Council have adopted the Safe Systems approach to Road Safety. This centres around the principles that our life and health should not be compromised by our need to travel. It puts the human being at the centre of 5 pillars, acknowledging human fallibility, thus placing the safe system around them with the goal that a crash should not occur, or if it does occur, it is controlled to the extent that it does not result in death or life-changing injury. These 5 pillars are:-

- Safe Road Use;
- Safe Vehicles;
- Safe Speeds;
- Safe Roads and Roadsides; and
- Post-Crash Response

The Road Safety Improvement Fund (RSIF) is a key initiative by the Scottish Government to enhance safety across the local road network. The funding for specific use on targeted casualty reduction schemes. Highland Council's RSIF 25/26 Programme is as follows:-

Caithness & Sutherland Standardised Gateway Enhancement programme on the NC500	Lairg, Elphin, John O' Groats, Keiss, Watten, Lochinver
Nairn, Badenoch & Strathspey Road Safety Priority Route Treatment Aviemore Granish	A939 Grantown to Nairn - specifically targeting Motorcycle Collisions Safety Measures and Speed Limit Scheme
Inverness Sunnyside	Speed Limit & Pedestrian Safety Improvement Scheme over Railway bridge
Lochaber A833 Corran to Drumfern	Road Safety Improvement Investigation and potential Improvement works scheme. Speed Limit at Achaphubuil

8 Public Transport Improvements

8.1 The Scottish Government has introduced a new Bus Infrastructure Fund (BIF) to enhance the quality and efficiency of bus services by addressing congestion and investing in supporting infrastructure. Replacing the previous Bus Partnership Fund, the BIF is designed to deliver targeted bus priority measures that improve journey times and reliability, thereby encouraging a shift towards public transport use. The fund will support the development of infrastructure such as dedicated bus lanes, upgraded bus stops, and other priority features that enable buses to bypass traffic and operate more efficiently. A key objective is to mitigate the impact of congestion on service performance making bus travel a more attractive and dependable option. The BIF promotes collaborative working between local authorities and bus operators, ensuring the design and delivery of effective, locally tailored solutions that align with broader sustainable transport and climate objectives.

The new fund will be distributed across two tiers. Tier 1 will be allocated to each local authority on a grant-awarded basis. Tier 2 will operate as a competitive funding stream open to bids from local authorities. For the 2025/26 financial year, Tier 2 funding has been ringfenced for local authorities with legacy Bus Partnership Fund (BPF) projects – of which The Highland Council is one.

8.2 **Appendix 3** presents a suite of proposed projects with a combined value of £1.9m, which have been submitted to Transport Scotland for consideration under Tier 2 of the Bus Infrastructure Fund. These proposals aim to deliver targeted bus priority and infrastructure improvements that support more efficient and reliable bus services across the region.

8.3 In 2021, the Council's Economy and Infrastructure Committee approved the initiation of a Bus Service Improvement Partnership (BSIP). BSIPs operate on two levels: a Plan, which sets out the overarching policy and strategic objectives, and one or more Schemes, which deliver the practical implementation of the Plan within defined geographical areas. The Sustainable Transport Team continues to lead on this comprehensive strategy to improve the efficiency, accessibility, and sustainability of bus services across the Highland region. The primary objective of the BSIP Plan is to increase bus and coach patronage by enhancing service attractiveness, raising public awareness, simplifying travel options, and improving the level of provision. This work directly supports the Scottish Government's target of reducing car kilometres, positioning the Highland Council area as an active contributor to national climate and transport goals.

9 Local Transport Strategy and Policy Update

9.1 As Members will be aware, the Local Transport Strategy (LTS) 2025–2035 was adopted by this Committee in February 2025. Building on this, a consultant was appointed in June to support officers in the development and implementation of the LTS Delivery Plan. The aim is to present the Delivery Plan to this Committee for approval in November 2025 or February 2026, with the exact timing dependent on decisions to be made by the newly established steering group, which will provide oversight and governance throughout the process.

The LTS is a Council-wide strategy, and its success relies on collaboration and coordination across departments to ensure an integrated approach to the delivery of transport actions. Our external stakeholders and partners will also have a vital and equal role in the process, working alongside the Council to shape and implement the Delivery Plan. Together, we are committed to realising the LTS Vision:

That our communities, businesses, and visitors to the Highlands are served by a low-carbon transport system that is sustainable, inclusive, safe, resilient, and accessible.

9.2 Consultants have also been appointed to develop an **Integrated Transport Plan (ITP) for Fort William**, with the project formally initiated at an inception meeting held in Fort William on 25 June 2025. The study is jointly funded by Transport Scotland, HITRANS and The Highland Council, and responds directly to Recommendation 32 of the Strategic Transport Projects Review 2 (STPR2) which calls for trunk road and motorway renewal to improve reliability, resilience, and safety. HiTRANS is leading the procurement process, supported by a client delivery group comprising representatives from Transport Scotland, The Highland Council (including the FW2040 initiative) and Highlands and Islands Enterprise.

The scope of the study includes:-

- A review, proportionate refresh, and validation of the evidence base and findings from the Fort William Strategic Transport Study: Case for Change (2018) and the Preliminary Appraisal (2023), to reconfirm the key transport challenges, issues, and opportunities facing the town.

- Transport modelling and additional data collection, where required, to support robust analysis.

- Stakeholder engagement and community consultation to ensure the plan reflects local needs and aspirations.

- Development of a Detailed Scottish Transport Appraisal Guidance (STAG) Appraisal of identified options. This will follow the Scottish Transport Appraisal Guidance (STAG) process, which includes four key stages: (1) Case for Change; (2) Preliminary Appraisal; (3) Detailed Appraisal; and (4) Post-Appraisal Evaluation. Completion of the STAG process is essential to secure future funding and enable informed decision-making on transport interventions.

Designation:	Assistant Chief Executive – Place
Date:	21 July 2025
Author:	Sustainable Transport Team
Background Papers:	None
Appendices:	Appendix 1 – Sustainable Transport Team Newsletter Appendix 2 – Highland Casualty Statistics Appendix 3 – Bus Infrastructure Fund Proposals

February 2025

Sustainable Transport Newsletter

Dear All

Welcome to the very first Sustainable Transport Team Newsletter. We plan to publish this annually but will be posting updates on projects and initiatives on our web pages quarterly.

The Sustainable Transport Team is comprised of the Active Travel Team and the Road Safety Team with the addition of some legacy work from the Bus Partnership Fund (BPF) work, which is currently on pause for the financial year 24/25. We hope to welcome replacement funding for the BPF in 25/26 in the form of the Bus Infrastructure Fund, which should allow us to have dedicated resource once again for this workstream, but we await further details from Transport Scotland on this.

We are currently constructing new web pages to include all the activities of the team and bring both the active travel teams and the road safety teams under the sustainable transport umbrella.

The team will be placing more focus on behaviour change from the 01/04/25 and we hope to have our plans finalised for this aspect very shortly, so please look out for our new web pages when they are launched for ongoing updates on workstreams.

We have included below some highlights from our work programmes throughout the last year.

Kindest regards

The Sustainable Transport Team

Active Travel

Public Engagement - Have Your Say on the proposed Rosskeen to Invergordon Active Travel Footpath

Sustrans and The Highland Council are working collaboratively to gauge support for a new active travel footpath between Rosskeen and Invergordon. A recent feasibility study identified the least environmentally impacting option to be an active travel path on the coast side of the B817 road.

You can contribute to the project design and be kept up to date on progress through our online page Have Your Say Today - Rosskeen To Invergordon - Commonplace.

Kingussie – Spey Street Junction Improvement Works

The Sustainable Transport Team recently completed a project in collaboration with Kingussie Community Development Company to upgrade the road and street infrastructure at Spey Street Junction in Kingussie. The works improve accessibility, active travel and pedestrian safety and connectivity with both High and Primary Schools, the train station and the recently upgraded route through Gynack Gardens.

Thanks to Cycle Friendly Kingussie who came up with the idea for the project and to Strath Civil Engineering who carried out the works.

Active Travel Capital Works

Capital Works within the financial period 24/25 will include the works detailed below. Some of the projects have been completed, others recently started, and some will start soon to be completed within the financial year:

- Contribution towards the upgrade of Tower Road Junction - completed.
- Thurso – Ormlie Road footway and junction crossing improvements between the Train Station and Hospital. Also, improvement of Castlegreen Road junction in collaboration with the Road Safety Team.
- Thurso – Janet Street footway improvement of the Mall (through the park) through widening and improved access.
- Raigmore Cycle Storage – installation of 17 cycle hangars at residential flats in Raigmore Estate. Project joint funded by HITRANS.
- Aviemore – Burnside Road and footpath leading to rail tunnel widening and improved accessibility at crossing points.
- Inverness - Culduthel Avenue cut back and improvement works – completed.
- Inverness – Culloden Road footpath improvement between Tower Road and Caulfield Road junctions - removal of cobbles, widening path surface and new uncontrolled crossing infrastructure at junctions.

UK Shared Prosperity Funding

The Active Travel Team have provided new and improved footpaths, crossing facilities and cycling infrastructure at Nairn Harbour (Sundancer Path), Fort William (Monzie Square, Fraser Square and at the Old Fort/Carmichael Way) and between Balloch to Brookfield with UK Shared Prosperity Funding. Some examples of the works are shown below:






Further works are being progressed through UK Shared Prosperity Funding and will be completed before 31 March 2025:

- Inverness – Hilton and Raigmore housing estates will benefit from footpath improvements.
- Alness – Obsdale Road link to Old Milnafau Road will be improved to benefit both cycling and walking access.

Riverside Way

The Riverside Way project, which was completed in July 2024, has made it safer and more accessible to walk, wheel and cycle along Ness Walk and Bught Road. The Riverside Way has created more space for people travelling actively, with a new segregated northbound cycle lane and one-way carriageway southbound. In addition, widened footways and improved crossing facilities have been introduced to improve safety for people walking, wheeling and cycling at junctions. Parking arrangements for motorised vehicles have also been formalised and cycle parking introduced, making it much more convenient to use this popular route. Crucially, the Riverside Way is a massive boost for local connectivity, linking to many key facilities and destinations, including the Caledonian Canal, Royal Northern Infirmary Community Hospital, Eden Court, the Botanic Gardens and more. As part of the Inverness City Active Travel Network, which has delivered segregated cycle lanes, improved crossings and accessible bridges across the city, The Riverside Way is a cornerstone in efforts to help create a healthier, more inclusive and attractive environment for walking, wheeling and cycling.

Beauly to Inverness Path

Work was completed on a new stretch of walking and cycling pathway between Dunballoch and Cabrich, linking the existing Lovat Bridge - Dunballoch pathway with the minor road to Cabrich and onwards to Moniack. This new path provides a safe, segregated, comfortable option for those walking and cycling and marks the creation of another link in the chain of a safe route between Inverness and Beauly.

Bus Partnership Fund

Raigmore Bus Gate

Work on a new bus only link that connects Raigmore Hospital to Raigmore Estate was completed in April 2024. The project was funded by Transport Scotland's Bus Partnership Fund (BPF) and delivered by the Bus Service Improvement Partnership (BSIP) Group, comprised of The Highland Council, NHS Highland, HITRANS and Stagecoach. The new route has helped reduce congestion on Old Perth Road and outside Raigmore Hospital and has improved bus services to Raigmore Estate, Raigmore Hospital and the National Treatment Centre - Highland. The bus gate is part of a suite of projects designed to encourage more bus use and includes the prioritisation of buses at traffic lights in the city centre on cross city routes to help reliability and punctuality.

Torvean Mobility Hub

The Torvean Mobility Hub in Inverness was officially opened in July 2024 by the Cabinet Secretary for Transport, Fiona Hyslop. The £600,000 mobility hub is located in the west of Inverness beside the Caledonian Canal and was developed by The Highland Council and partners and was part funded by the Bus Partnership Fund. The Hub includes a bus stop, cycle parking, car parking (to support park and ride) and a Hi-Bike electric bike docking station, which we hope will become operational soon.

Road Safety

20 MPH Speed Limit Statutory Consultation

After an 18-month temporary period, the 20 MPH speed limit project is now progressing to the statutory consultation phase. The project, which aimed to enhance road safety and improve the quality of life for residents, has shown promising results.

During the temporary period, the reduced speed limit was implemented in 126 settlements across Highland, leading to a more active travel-friendly environment. Feedback from the communities has been positive, with many residents and Community Councils appreciating the calmer and safer streets.

The statutory consultation will provide an opportunity for all stakeholders, including residents and businesses, to share their views and suggestions. This phase is crucial for ensuring that the final implementation of the 20 MPH speed limit meets the needs and expectations of the community.

We encourage everyone to participate in the consultation process and have their say in shaping the future of our roads. Together, we can create a safer and more pleasant environment for all.

Bikeability

This year we have secured funding and recruited 4 Bikeability Instructors to support and, hopefully, increase delivery of Level 2 on road training in Highland schools.

The benefit of these instructors has already been seen with an increase in Term 1 and 2 delivery over last years: 6 schools delivered across T1 & T2 in 2023-2024 and 14 schools have delivered so far this year.

We will continue to work alongside trained volunteers and school staff building towards our goal of delivery at 50% of schools in Highland this academic year. Recruitment to fill the remaining 6 casual posts is ongoing.

Safer Routes to School

In 2024, we have continued to deliver road safety improvements at schools throughout the Highlands. By improving safety and removing barriers, we hope to encourage pupils, parents and staff to choose a form of active travel for their journeys to and from school.

These improvements include:

- Introducing lining, coloured surfacing and dropped kerb crossing points, as well as delineation bollards at Golspie Primary School.
- Reinstatement of dropped kerbs at Thrumster & Tongue Primary Schools.
- Footpath and dropped kerb improvements at Dingwall Academy.
- Introducing steps, a ramp and a new footpath link at Milton Primary School.
- SID sign installation at Sleat Primary School.
- Developing plans to undertake pavement improvement Scheme, as well as having already introduced SID signs at Tarradale Primary School.
- Footpath and crossing improvements at Drummond Primary School.
- Remedial Works at Holm Primary School.
- Junction narrowing and active travel improvements at Millbank Primary.

Road Safety Improvement Fund

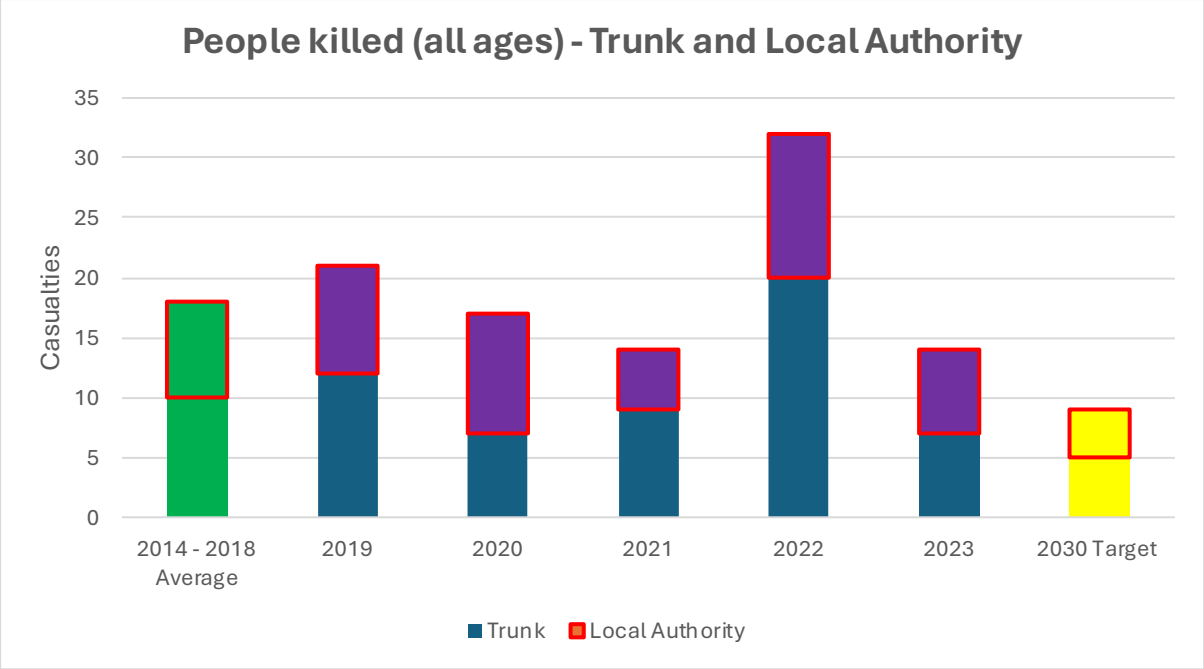
The Road Safety Improvement Fund Grant has been used to deliver a programme of collision reduction schemes on the Council's local road network. Notable projects delivered in 2024 include:-

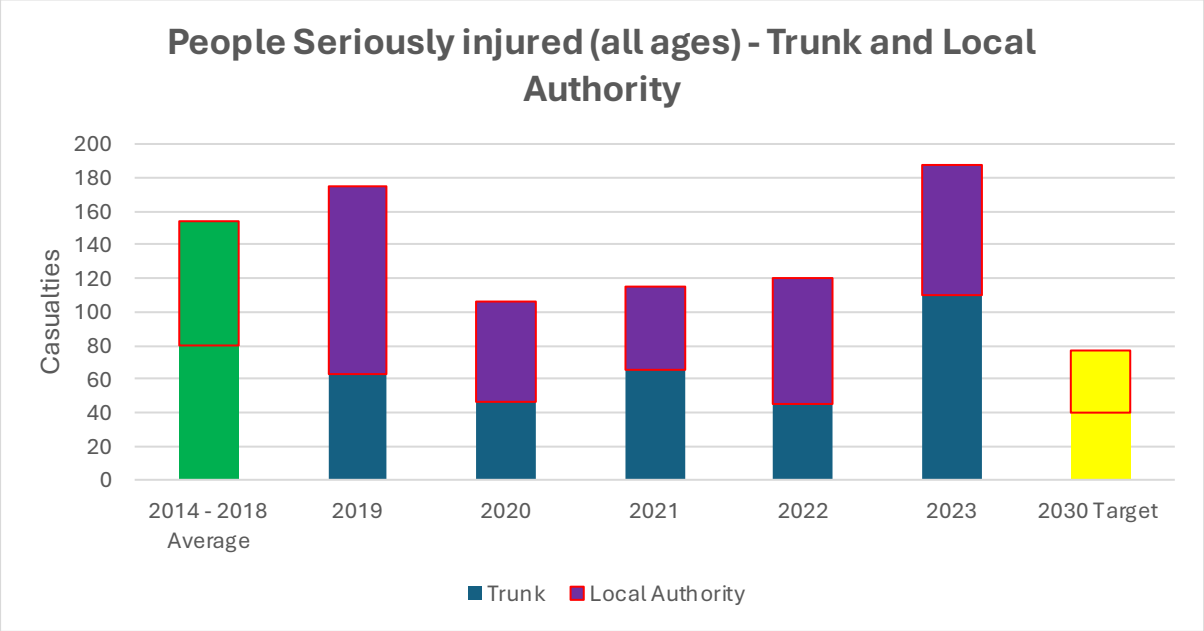
- The introduction of gateways in Reay, Melvich, Bettyhill, Tongue and Durness.
- School access road improvements at Alness Academy and Delmore Road.
- B9090/ C1017 Inverness Airport junction reconfiguration.
- Safety improvements at Struie High Bridge
- Junction improvement on the B9006 Tower Road junction.

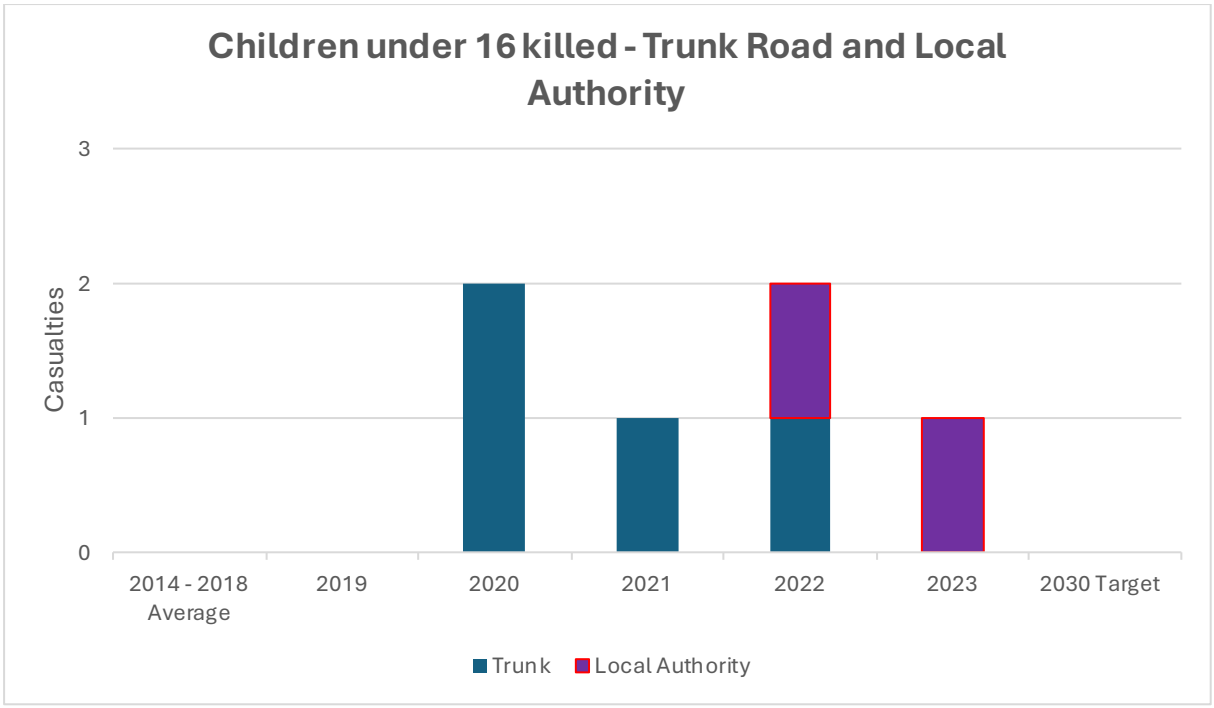
Examples of some of the works the Road Safety Team have done in 2024 are shown below:

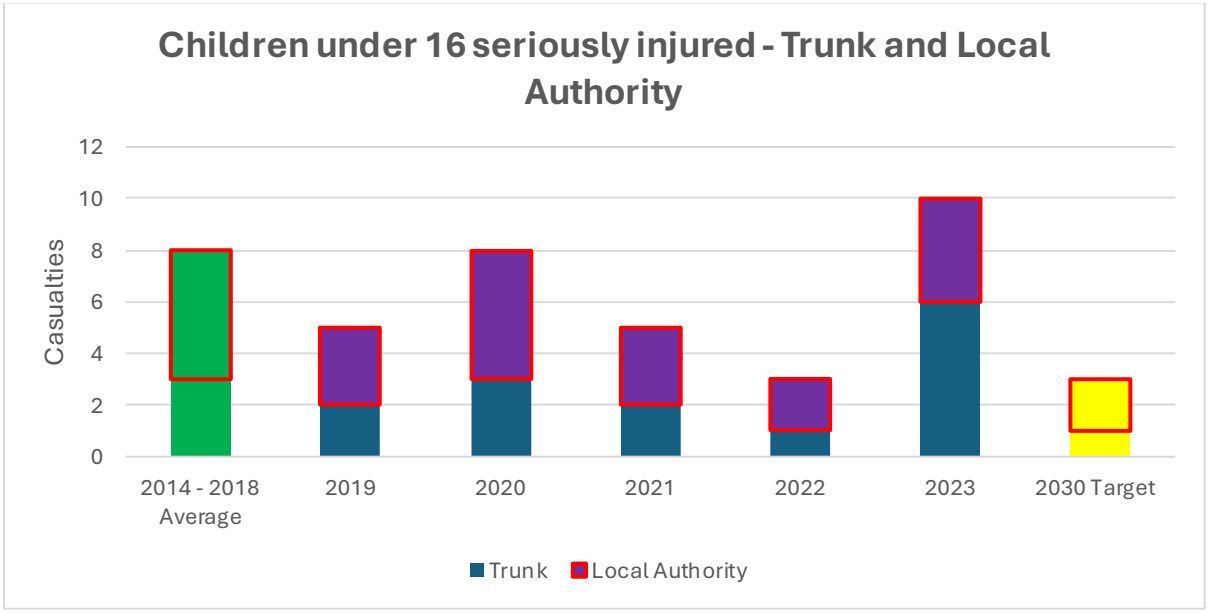


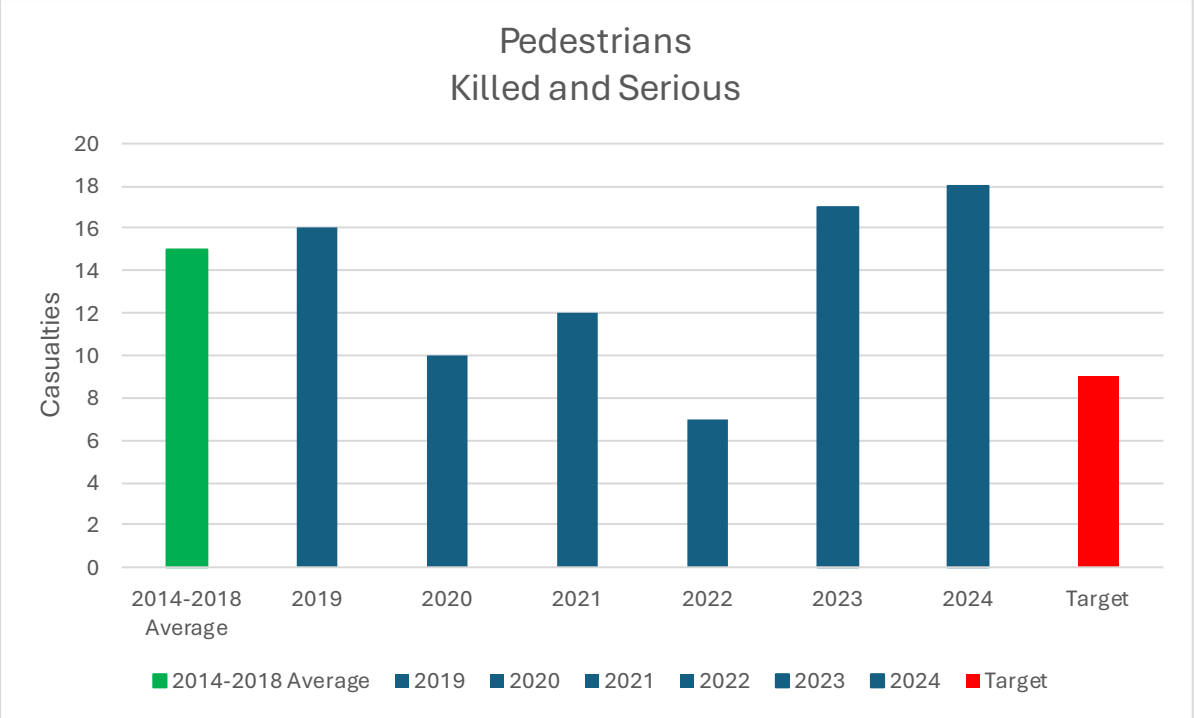


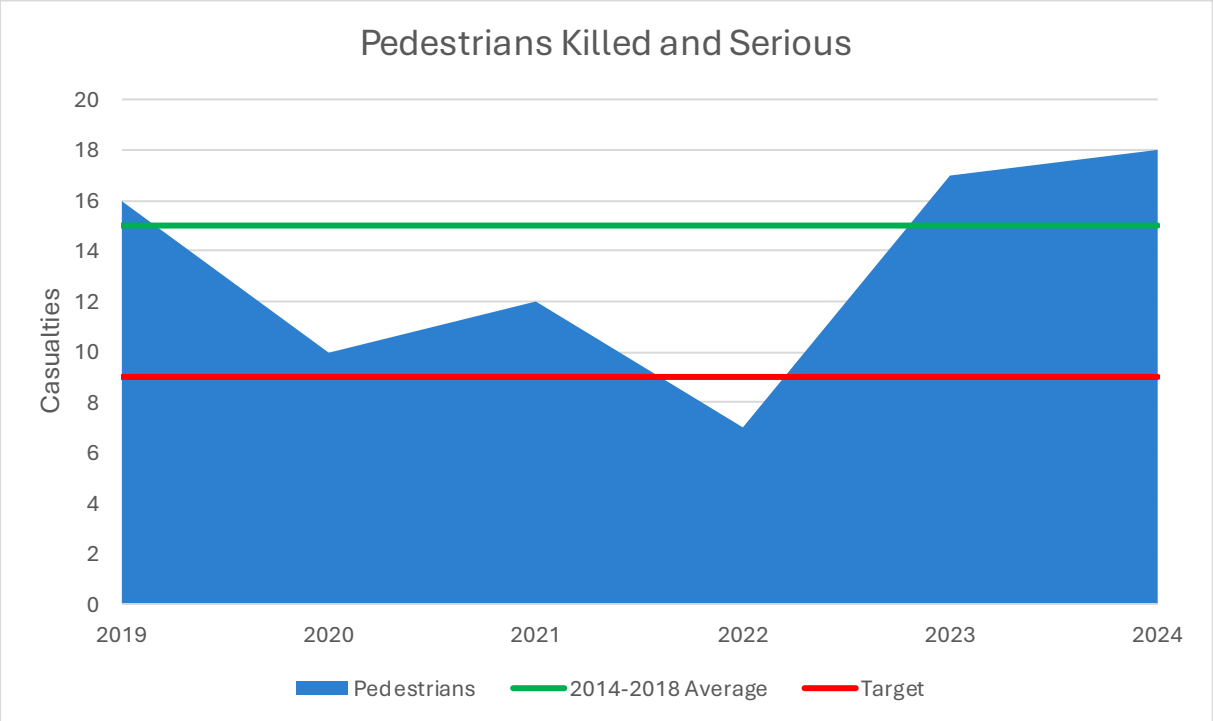

People killed (all ages) - Trunk and Local Authority
Casualties
35
30
25
20
15
10
5
0
2014 - 2018 Average
2019
2020
2021
2022
2023
2030 Target
Trunk
Local Authority

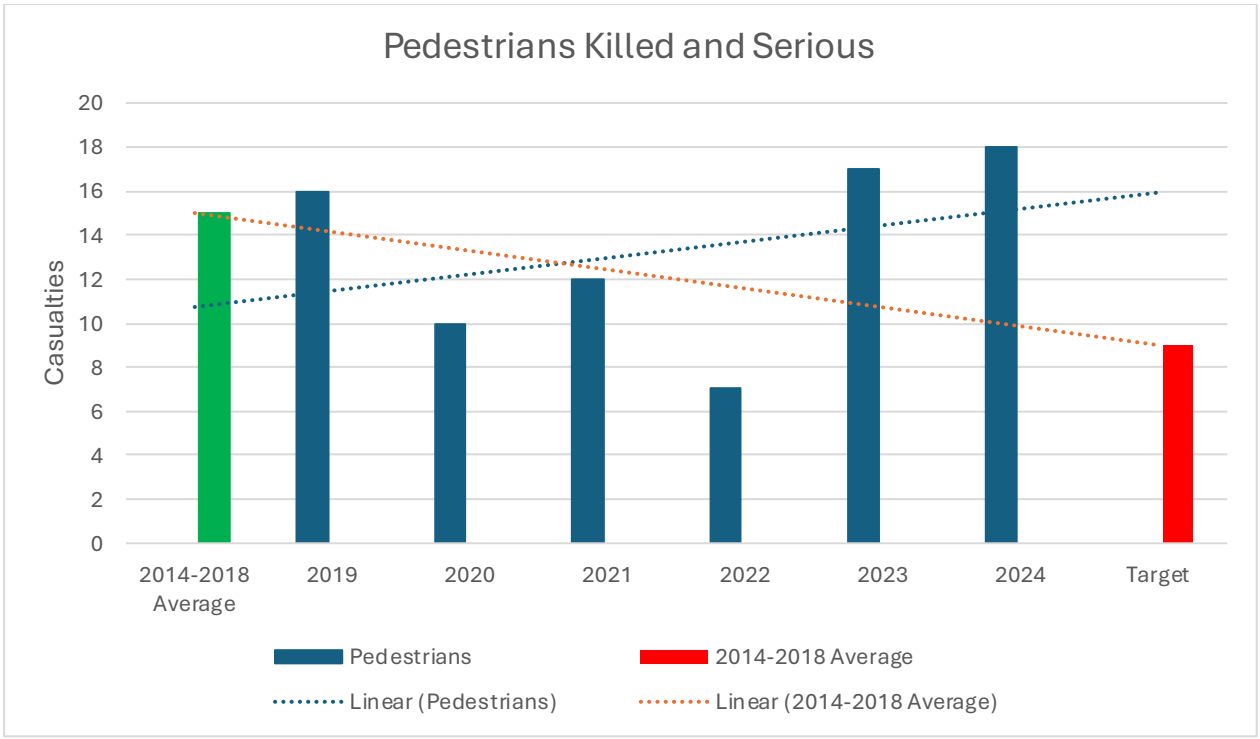

People Seriously injured (all ages) - Trunk and Local Authority
Casualties
200
180
160
140
120
100
80
60
40
20
0
2014 - 2018 Average
2019
2020
2021
2022
2023
2030 Target
Trunk
Local Authority

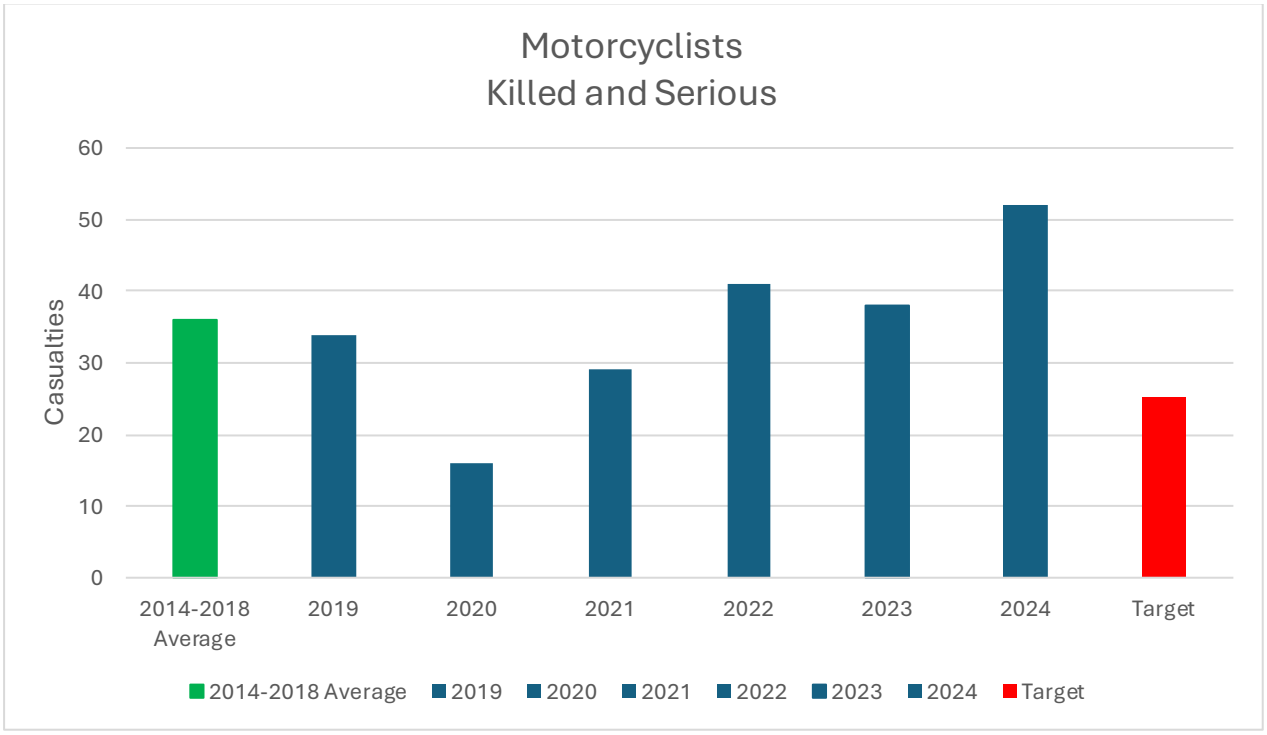

Children under 16 killed - Trunk Road and Local Authority
Casualties
3
2
1
0
2014 - 2018 Average
2019
2020
2021
2022
2023
2030 Target
Trunk
Local Authority

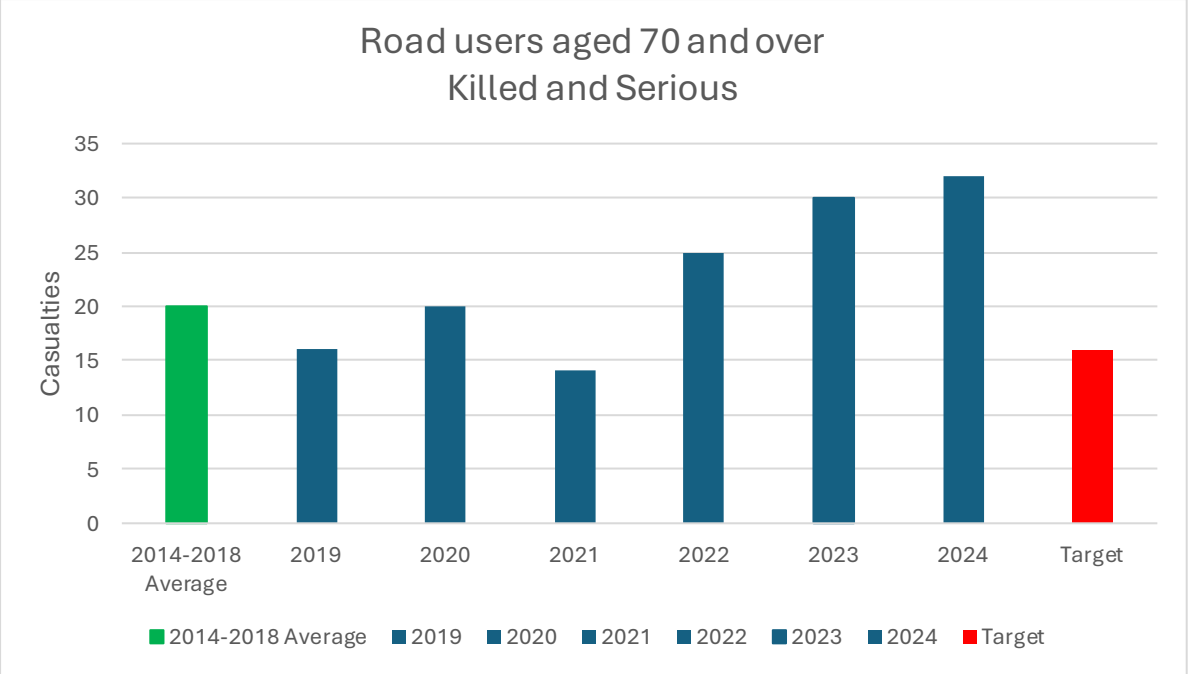

Children under 16 seriously injured - Trunk and Local Authority
Casualties
12
10
8
6
4
2
0
2014 - 2018 Average
2019
2020
2021
2022
2023
2030 Target
Trunk
Local Authority

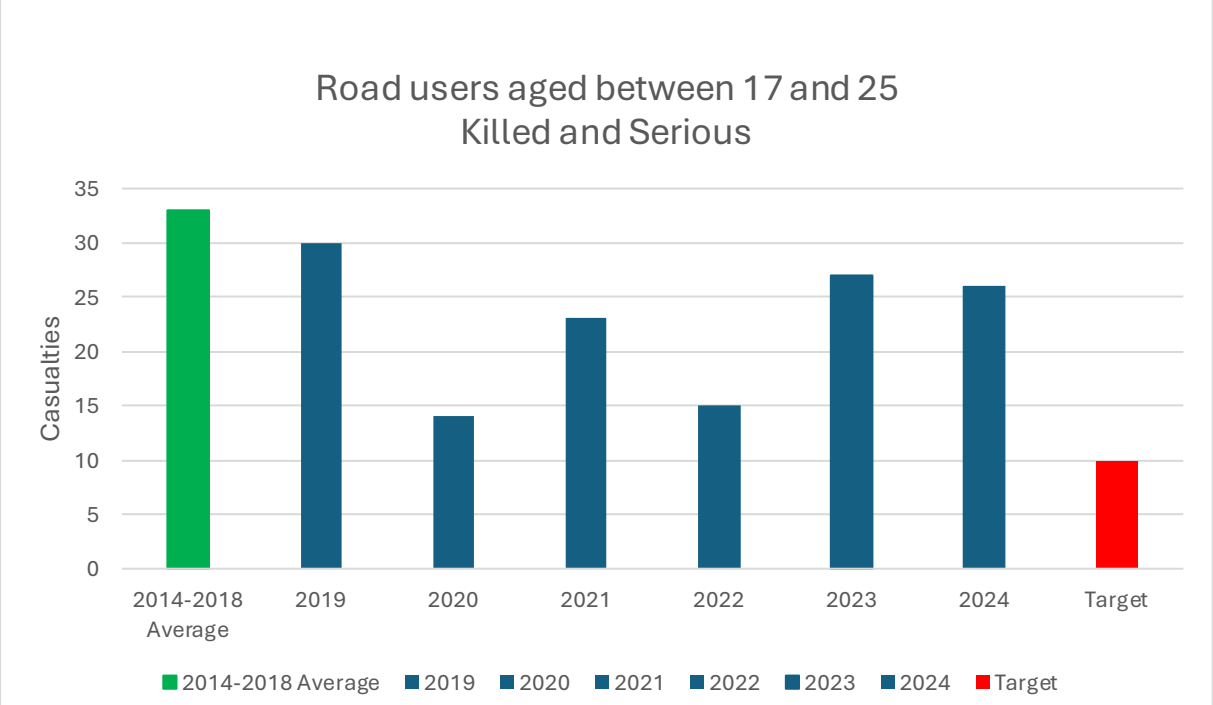

Pedestrians
Killed and Serious
Casualties
20
18
16
14
12
10
8
6
4
2
0
2014-2018 Average
2019
2020
2021
2022
2023
2024
Target
2014-2018 Average
2019
2020
2021
2022
2023
2024
Target

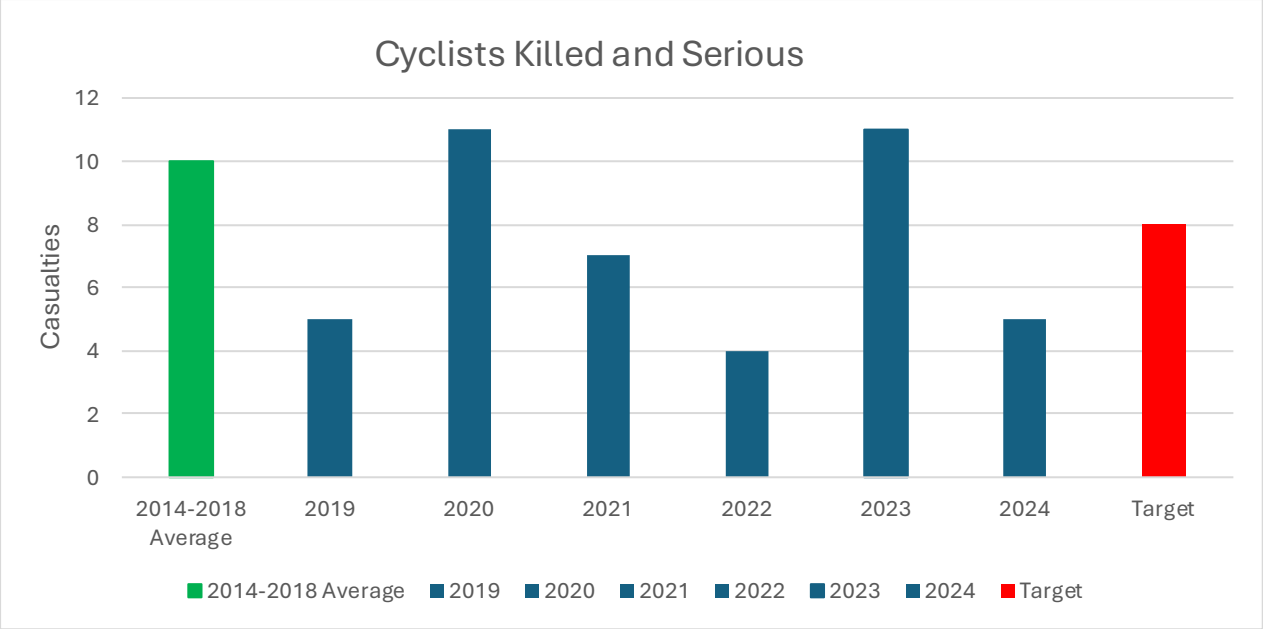

Pedestrians Killed and Serious
Casualties
20
18
16
14
12
10
8
6
4
2
0
2019
2020
2021
2022
2023
2024
Pedestrians
2014-2018 Average
Target


Pedestrians Killed and Serious
Casualties
20
18
16
14
12
10
8
6
4
2
0
2014-2018 Average
2019
2020
2021
2022
2023
2024
Target
Pedestrians
2014-2018 Average
Linear (Pedestrians)
Linear (2014-2018 Average)


Motorcyclists
Killed and Serious
Casualties
60
50
40
30
20
10
0
2014-2018 Average
2019
2020
2021
2022
2023
2024
Target
2014-2018 Average
2019
2020
2021
2022
2023
2024
Target


Road users aged 70 and over
Killed and Serious
Casualties
35
30
25
20
15
10
5
0
2014-2018 Average
2019
2020
2021
2022
2023
2024
Target
2014-2018 Average
2019
2020
2021
2022
2023
2024
Target


Road users aged between 17 and 25
Killed and Serious
Casualties
35
30
25
20
15
10
5
0
2014-2018 Average
2019
2020
2021
2022
2023
2024
Target
2014-2018 Average
2019
2020
2021
2022
2023
2024
Target


Cyclists Killed and Serious
Casualties
12
10
8
6
4
2
0
2014-2018 Average
2019
2020
2021
2022
2023
2024
Target
2014-2018 Average
2019
2020
2021
2022
2023
2024
Target

Bus Infrastructure Fund – Request for proposals

Bus Infrastructure Fund - Summary Table of Voluntary Partnership Proposals

Partnership Priority	Project Name	Brief Project Description	Total cost	Funding being sought from the Bus Infrastructure Fund
1	**Millburn Road Corridor**	Delivering bus priority and active travel measures along the Millburn Road Corridor.	£500,000	£500,000
2	**Fort William - Blar Mhor Bus Only Link**	Bus only link between the Fort William Health Centre and new residential development.	£510,000	£510,000
3	**Fort William – Upper Achintore Bus only Link**			
4	**Fort William – A82 / Nevis Terrace / Middle Street Junction Reconfiguration (incl. signalisation with bus priority)**	Reconfiguration of the A82 / Middle Street / Nevis Terrace junction (incl. bus priority signals).	£200,000	£200,000
5	**Inverness Mobility Hub Network**	Mobility hub implementation plan.	£200,000	£200,000
6	**Fort William – Relocation/reimagination of the Bus Station**	Relocation of the bus station to site on the existing Nevis Terrace car park.	£50,000	£50,000
7	**Inverness Bus Priority and Enforcement Measures**	Castle Street bus infrastructure improvements and enforcement cameras for existing bus gate and lanes.	£340,000	£340,000
8	**Inverness Bus Station Feasibility / Preliminary Appraisal Report**	Preliminary appraisal of options shortlisted in initial Feasibility / Case for Change report undertaken by HITRANS. Work feeds into STPR2 commitment for Inverness Station Masterplan by developing proposals for integrated bus/rail transport hub.	£100,000	£100,000

Executive Summary

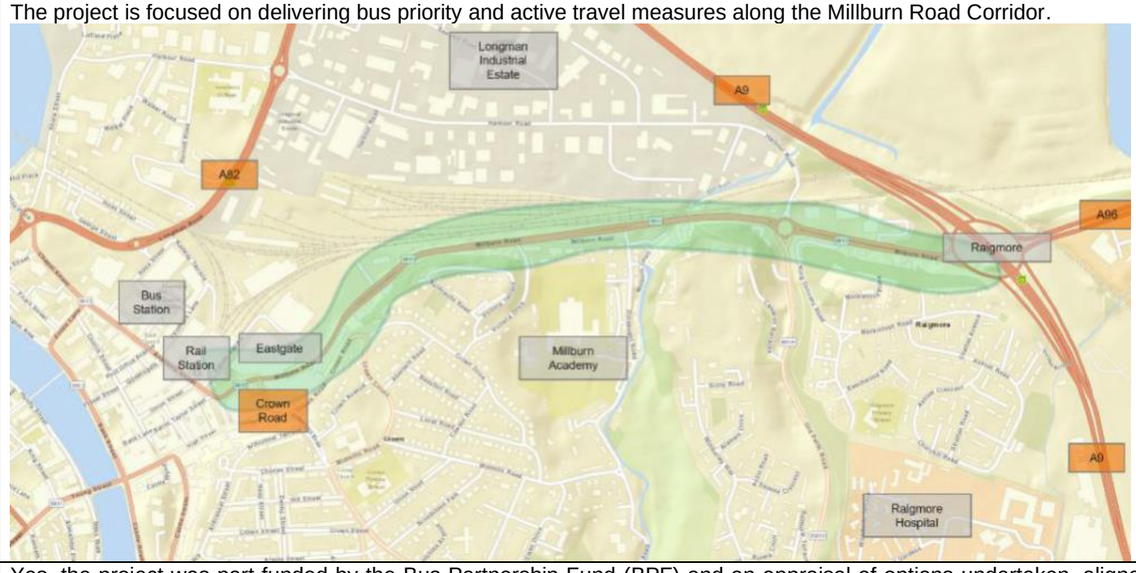
The Highland BSIP group are delighted to present our proposals for the Bus Infrastructure Fund Tier 2. The Highland BSIP Group are committed to continue to build on the excellent work they previously delivered under the Bus Partnership Fund. and are delighted to present our proposals for the Bus Infrastructure Fund. We have included a mix of short-, medium- and long-term proposals which we hope will be welcomed and target work for this financial year and continue to build on the previous BPF work already delivered with some additions which focus on key strategic bus projects to harness the forthcoming economic growth opportunities the Highland area will have over the coming years.

We are focused to deliver infrastructure on the ground within the 25/26 financial year and we continue to work on options where the group can deliver in the very short term the specific projects which could fall into this category are:

- the relocation of the cycle lane to enhance bus priority on the Millburn Corridor (Project 1 below)
- Castle street bus infrastructure and the link to Torvean and Inverness Castle as part of the City region deal & the enforcement cameras for bus lanes (Project 7 below)
- Mobility Hub Pilots directly connected to realising the full benefits of the unprecedented economic growth the Green Freeport will bring and the urgent need to reverse commuting patterns. We would hope this has been presented in a way where options for locations remain flexible such as the Tore site that may come back into play depending on the outcome of the current planning application due for consent section in August 2025. (Project 5 below)
- Blar Mhor (Project 2 below)
- Upper Achintore Phase 1(Project 3 below)

Our proposals total **£2,168,00** and the BSIP prioritisation order is detailed in the table above and further details of each project in the format of the TS form can be found below. In addition, Project Management costs will be 10% of funding award which will be **£216,800** if all 8 proposals are awarded funding. Total would be **£2,384,800.**

Bus Infrastructure Fund - Project Proposal Form

Project Name	Millburn Road Corridor
Questions	**Response**
Voluntary Partnership Priority of Bus Infrastructure Tier 2 Funding Proposals submitted	1
Partnership project contact (Name, job description, organisation, e-mail address and contact details)*	Julie Cromarty Sustainable Transport Team Leader Julie.cromarty@highland.gov.uk 01463 702004
Project manager project contact (Name, job description, organisation, e-mail address and contact details)*	Neil Young Active Travel Manager The Highland Council Neil.young@highland.gov.uk 01463 702004
I confirm that I have read the privacy policy and consent to the data I provide being used as set out in the policy.	Yes
Project location – co-ordinates	https://maps.app.goo.gl/fFx3i6GfoqdjsBfm9
Project description	The project is focused on delivering bus priority and active travel measures along the Millburn Road Corridor. 
Was this project identified through work undertaken through the Bus Partnership Fund? Please briefly outline details. (max 300 words)	Yes, the project was part-funded by the Bus Partnership Fund (BPF) and an appraisal of options undertaken, aligned to Scottish Transport Appraisal Guidance (STAG). This included public and stakeholder engagement alongside a Case for Change, Preliminary Appraisal and Detailed Appraisal.
What stage(s) of project are you seeking funding for	During the financial year 2025-26, funding is sought for the following: • Extending the design work (broadly to PfE Stage 2 Concept Design) to include a Cost Plan (to feed the VfM derivation in the Economic Dimension of the OBC) and a Design Risk Register. • Modelling exercise and to feed the OBC and undertake operational analysis. • Expanding the engagement exercise to include a wider range of activities, learning lessons from Academy Street and the need for a holistic focus on engagement to build consensus and ensure ongoing stakeholder/public buy-in. • Reporting of the Strategic and Economic Dimensions of the OBC.
What is the total amount of funding you need to progress this project in 2025-26?	£500,000

Project Name	Millburn Road Corridor
What is the total amount of funding you are looking for from the Bus Infrastructure Fund Tier 2?	£500,000
Is this a multi-year project? Please provide cost details about the project if design or construction will span multiple financial years. If a project is multi-year, please make it clear what is proposed for 2025-26 and what is proposed for subsequent years.	The project is multi-year and during the financial year **2025-26**, the following is proposed: • Extending the design work (broadly to PfE Stage 2 Concept Design) to include a Cost Plan (to feed the VfM derivation in the Economic Dimension of the OBC) and a Design Risk Register. • Consideration of the modelling exercise and what would be required to feed the OBC and undertake operational analysis. • Expanding the engagement exercise to include a wider range of activities (and not just a public engagement exercise as was previously proposed). • Reporting of the Strategic and Economic Dimensions of the OBC. • Relocate cycle lane to improve bus priority through Eastgate junction In the following financial year (i.e. **2026-27**), the following is proposed: • More detailed design work (broadly to PfE Stage 3 and 4 level) – to enable the council to go out to procurement and subsequent FBC following tender returns • Modelling of the preferred option – considering detailed signal plans / phasing at this stage and any further required design adjustments. • Reporting of the full OBC – building on the Strategic and Economic Dimensions of the OBC (as developed in 2025-26), and completing all tasks required for the Commercial, Financial and Management Dimensions. During 2027-28, the following is proposed: • FBC and Tender package. • Construction and site supervision.
Please briefly (max 500 words) describe the proposed project. If a project is multi-year, please make it clear what is proposed for 2025-26 and what is proposed for subsequent years.	The project aims to create safer, more attractive, healthier places by increasing the number of trips made by walking, cycling and wheeling for everyday journeys alongside investing in bus priority measures to reduce private car use and increase bus patronage. The project currently encompasses four options which are at an early design stage. These options emerged from the appraisal, and each included both protected cycle routes and bus lanes along the corridor, integrating with new and improved bus stops and pedestrian crossings. As previously outlined above, the following provides a summary of the project's intended progression: • **2025-26** - to preliminary design stage, and associated modelling and OBC development. • **2026-27 -** to detailed design, and completion of OBC • **2027-28** - phase 1 construction. The project forms part of a wider strategic vision for Inverness and forms the number 1 priority for dedicated bus priority by the Bus Service Improvement Partnership (BSIP). This is because Millburn Road is a key artery towards Inverness city centre and a range of facilities, including retail, employment and leisure. Millburn Road is though subject to a range of problems and issues identified and evidenced during the appraisal. A quick win delivery in 2025-2026 is the relocation of the cycle lane to enhance bus priority. The existing layout has a bi-directional cycle lane in one of the carriageway lanes. Relocating the cycle lane would free up a section of carriageway which could be designated as bus only.
Please briefly (max 300 words) describe the key scheme objectives.	The project centres around three core transport planning objectives, evidenced and defined within the Millburn Corridor Appraisal Report produced by Stantec. The objectives are to: • Increase trips by active travel modes between the city centre, Millburn Academy, Raigmore Hospital and Inverness Campus by 100% by 2030 compared to 2022 volumes. • Increase bus patronage by 50% by 20230 from 2022 levels between the city centre, Raigmore Hospital, Inverness Campus and the communities of Crown, Raigmore, Culcabock, Inshes, Cradelhall, Smithton, Balloch and Nairn. • Ensure 30% of trips between the Inverness East development and destinations on the Millburn corridor and in inverness city centre are undertaken by non-car based more sustainable transport modes by 2030. The objectives were informed by the prior overarching aims of both the Bus Partnership Fund and the Sustrans Places for Everyone (PfE) programme, as well as a consideration of the key problems and opportunities and wider established transport, land use planning and economic policy context.
Please set out the project management and other staffing or consultancy costs that you anticipate you will need to deliver this project.	The Highland Council is seeking funding towards resources to project manage and oversee the delivery of the project, as well as consultancy support. This is as follows: 2025-26

Project Name	Millburn Road Corridor

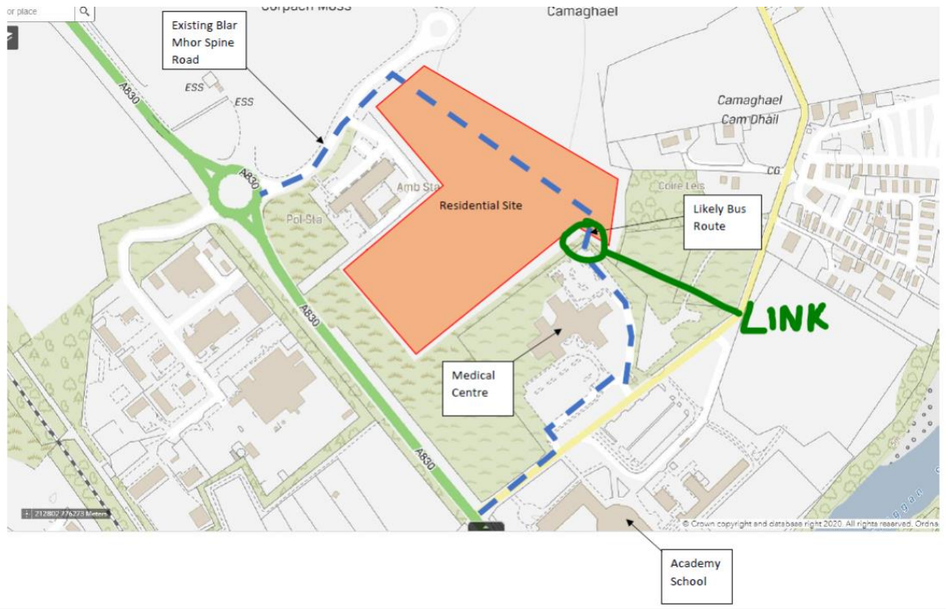
	• THC dedicated project management:
	  ○ BIF Tier 2 Programme Proposals by THC would require 10% project management costs. So if we are awarded all 8 proposals we would require £216,800.00
	• Consultancy Support:
	  ○ Design £60,000.
	  ○ Modelling £245,000
	  ○ Engagement £65,000.
	  ○ Outline Business Case £55,000
	• Quick win Bus Priority Eastgate Junction
	  ○ Relocation of cycle lane for Bus Priority construction & car parking reduction feasibility £75,000

What costs associated with the above are you seeking from the Bus Infrastructure Fund Tier 2.	The Highland Council is seeking support for all costs to be covered.
How will the project and its development demonstrate value for money/best value? Is the project supported by a business case (where applicable)? (max 300 words)	The Millburn corridor serves as a vital link between the city centre, retail areas, residential neighbourhoods, and key transport hubs, and it currently faces significant challenges in terms of congestion, safety, and accessibility for non-car users. The proposed measures to improve bus journey times, introduce segregated cycling infrastructure, and enhance pedestrian facilities are a timely and much-needed response to the growing demand for sustainable and inclusive transport in the city. Prioritising active and public transport on this corridor will support wider objectives including: • Reducing carbon emissions and contributing to Inverness's and Highland Council's climate targets. • Improving air quality and public health through more walking, wheeling, and cycling. • Enhancing transport equity, by making travel more accessible to those without access to private vehicles. • Supporting local economic vitality by improving connections to retail, education, and employment opportunities. It will be important that the final designs carefully consider access for all users, including those with mobility impairments, and that high-quality design principles are upheld throughout to ensure comfort and safety. The appraisal completed as part of the BPF included an economic assessment of the options emerging, and demonstrated that the best performing options offered value for money with benefit to cost ratio in excess of 1. Whilst the full extent of economic cost due to traffic redistribution was not yet quantified, the delivery of a true multi-modal corridor offers a range of benefits, not just in terms of value for money. The project would be subject to an outline business case, within which modelling would offer greater granularity to reach a conclusion on the level of economic benefit offered by the emerging project. Overall, this project represents a significant opportunity to transform the Millburn Corridor into a more efficient, inclusive, and future-ready transport link for Inverness.
For construction projects, please confirm that your projects are construction ready. We are looking for confirmation that these are construction ready e.g. have no outstanding land ownership issues, all permissions are in place, design complete, monitoring and evaluation plan in place, cost estimates finalised, utilities surveys undertaken etc. (max 300 words)	N/A however there is an element to enhance bus priority by re-locating a cycling lane which will be done in 25/26, costs included in the overall costs for this project.
Please provide max 500 words on how the project provides high-quality bus infrastructure which contribute to the four priorities of the National Transport Strategy (NTS2) vision – to reduce inequality, take climate action, help deliver inclusive growth and improve health and well-being.	The proposed active travel and bus priority improvements along the Millburn Corridor in Inverness strongly align with the four priorities of the National Transport Strategy (NTS2) vision: • **Reduces Inequalities:** The enhanced bus infrastructure will improve access to affordable and reliable public transport, benefiting those who rely on buses for essential journeys, including lower-income households, young people, older adults, and those without access to a private vehicle. By improving journey times and reliability, the project makes public transport a more viable option for all users, helping to bridge gaps in transport access and reduce social exclusion. • **Takes Climate Action:** Prioritising buses over private car traffic on the corridor directly supports a modal shift toward more sustainable transport. Improved bus journey times and reduced delays at pinch points will encourage greater use of public transport, helping to reduce greenhouse gas emissions and air pollution. The integration of active travel infrastructure further complements this by promoting walking, wheeling, and cycling as alternatives to short car journeys. • **Helps Deliver Inclusive Economic Growth:** A more efficient and connected bus network strengthens Inverness's ability to support inclusive growth. The Millburn Corridor links residential areas to key employment, education, and retail destinations, including the city centre, Inverness Campus, and the retail park. Enhancing bus infrastructure ensures that people across all demographics can access opportunities more easily, improving labour market participation and supporting local businesses through better connectivity.

Project Name	Millburn Road Corridor
	• **Improves Health and Well-being:** High-quality, accessible public transport reduces reliance on cars and supports more active lifestyles by encouraging multi-modal travel. Reduced traffic congestion and improved air quality contribute directly to better public health outcomes. Furthermore, by making sustainable transport modes more attractive and safer, the project supports healthier travel habits and reduces stress associated with unreliable or lengthy commutes. In summary, by delivering high-quality bus infrastructure, the project supports a more accessible, sustainable, inclusive, and healthier transport network.
How does the project positively impact an area of higher deprivation (as identified by the Scottish Index of Multiple Deprivation (SIMD))? Are there any specific impacts on child poverty? (max 300 words)	The Millburn Corridor project delivers targeted benefits to areas identified as experiencing higher levels of deprivation, including neighbourhoods within Inverness that fall within the most deprived 20% of data zones according to the Scottish Index of Multiple Deprivation (SIMD), such as parts of Raigmore, Longman, and the eastern city centre which face challenges related to access to affordable transport, employment, education, and services. Positive impacts of the project on areas of higher deprivation include: • **Improving Access and Affordability:** For residents in SIMD-identified areas, access to affordable, reliable public transport is essential for daily life. By prioritising buses and improving service efficiency along the Millburn Corridor, the project reduces journey times and improves reliability—making public transport more attractive, cost-effective, and accessible for low-income households. This helps address "transport poverty," where people are excluded from opportunities due to poor or unaffordable transport options. • **Supporting Children and Families:** The project is also expected to have a direct, positive impact on child poverty. In areas where families experience lower incomes and limited mobility, access to education, healthcare, and social opportunities can be constrained. The improved public transport infrastructure will enhance connectivity to key destinations such as schools (e.g., Millburn Academy), Inverness Campus, and child healthcare services. By improving access for families without private vehicles, the project helps reduce the disadvantage that transport barriers impose on children's life chances. • **Enabling Inclusive Mobility:** High-quality, inclusive infrastructure—such as step-free access, well-lit bus stops, and safe pedestrian routes—supports families with pushchairs, children walking to school, and those with additional mobility needs. By improving these aspects along a busy urban corridor, the project contributes to safer, more equitable travel for all. • **Wider Social and Economic Benefits:** By connecting people in deprived areas more effectively to jobs, training, and essential services, the Millburn Corridor project contributes to a longer-term strategy for lifting individuals and families out of poverty. Improved public realm and safer streets also contribute to community well-being and resilience, particularly in areas that have historically been underserved by transport investment.
Does this project contribute to any Strategic Transport Projects Review 2 recommendations? (max 300 words)	The Millburn Corridor project in Inverness supports and contributes to multiple STPR2 recommendations, particularly in the areas of sustainable transport, modal shift, and equitable access. Alignment is demonstrated in the following ways: • **Enhancing Public Transport**: The bus priority measures, including dedicated bus lanes, will significantly improve the reliability and efficiency of bus services on Millburn Road. This aligns with STPR2 recommendations to enhance public transport, making it a more attractive option for commuters and reducing reliance on private cars. • **Active Travel Promotion**: The project includes the development of safe and accessible walking, wheeling, and cycling routes. By encouraging active travel, the project supports STPR2's goal of promoting healthier and more environmentally friendly modes of transport. • **Decarbonisation Efforts**: By prioritising sustainable transport options, the Millburn Road project contributes to Scotland's decarbonisation targets. Reducing car usage and promoting public and active transport will help lower greenhouse gas emissions, in line with related STPR2 recommendations. • **Improving Connectivity**: Enhancing the transport infrastructure on Millburn Road will improve connectivity between key areas in Inverness, including Raigmore Hospital and the city centre. This supports STPR2's aim to improve access and connectivity across urban and rural areas. • **Inclusive Growth**: The project is designed to benefit all members of the community, ensuring that transport improvements contribute to social inclusion and wellbeing. By providing better access to public and active transport options, the project addresses inequalities and supports STPR2's inclusive growth objectives.
Fit with the partnership area's overall strategy for integrated transport, to encourage a modal shift from cars to more sustainable transport modes to reduce emissions.	The Millburn Corridor project is a key component of the Highland partnership area's wider strategy to deliver an integrated, low-carbon transport system that reduces car dependency and supports a shift toward more sustainable modes, including public transport, walking, wheeling and cycling. Developed in alignment with the Highland Bus Service Improvement Partnership (BSIP) and the HITRANS Regional Transport Strategy and Highlands Local Transport Strategy, the project supports the shared ambition to create a well-connected, inclusive, and environmentally responsible transport network. By prioritising bus services through journey time improvements and infrastructure enhancements, the project addresses a major barrier to modal shift—bus service reliability—while also integrating high-quality active travel routes along a key urban corridor. The Millburn Corridor provides a critical link between residential areas, employment centres, retail destinations, and education hubs such as Inverness Campus. By improving connections through sustainable modes, the project makes public and active transport more viable, reducing the need for car journeys and directly contributing to emissions reductions. Importantly, the project is designed to integrate multiple modes with enhanced walking, wheeling and cycling infrastructure feeding into improved bus services, and proximity to Inverness rail station supporting onward travel. This multi-modal approach is essential to delivering the 20-minute neighbourhood concept and encouraging people to choose lower-carbon options for everyday travel.

Project Name	Millburn Road Corridor
	In summary, the Millburn Corridor project is fully aligned with the Highland region's strategic goals for integrated and sustainable transport. It supports long-term modal shift, helps meet net zero targets, and plays a vital role in creating a greener, healthier transport system for Inverness and beyond.
Please provide max 500 words on how the project is in line with the National Transport Strategy 2 sustainable travel and investment hierarchies, including to prioritise bus over other types of motorised traffic and ensuring integration with other modes.	The Millburn Corridor project is firmly aligned with the principles of the National Transport Strategy 2 (NTS2), particularly the Sustainable Travel Hierarchy and the Sustainable Investment Hierarchy, which guide decision-making to prioritise sustainable, inclusive, and environmentally responsible transport modes. **Sustainable Travel Hierarchy** NTS2 places walking, wheeling, and cycling at the top of the Sustainable Travel Hierarchy, followed by public transport—particularly buses—as preferred alternatives to private car use. The Millburn Corridor project supports this hierarchy in practice by: • Enhancing bus infrastructure to improve journey times and reliability, making public transport a more attractive choice for residents, workers, and visitors; • Prioritising buses over general traffic through bus lanes and junction improvements, reinforcing bus travel as the more efficient mode; • Improving pedestrian and cycling infrastructure to support active travel for short journeys and integration with longer public transport trips; • Creating safer, more inclusive spaces for those walking and wheeling, particularly at key junctions and crossing points. By delivering a corridor where active travel and bus users are clearly prioritised over general motorised traffic, the project directly supports the NTS2 vision for a transport system that reduces car dependency and encourages more sustainable, healthy travel behaviours. **Sustainable Investment Hierarchy** The Sustainable Investment Hierarchy prioritises maintaining and optimising existing infrastructure, then making better use of the network, before considering new infrastructure investment. The Millburn Corridor project reflects this by: • Upgrading existing infrastructure rather than building new roads. • Optimising road space use by reallocating it in favour of sustainable modes, including buses and active travel. • Integrating improvements into the existing transport network to enhance efficiency and accessibility, without large-scale new infrastructure. • Delivering best value by investing in targeted improvements that unlock wider network benefits across the city's transport system. The project also aligns with the investment hierarchy's goal of supporting broader policy objectives, including decarbonisation, air quality improvement, and social inclusion. By reducing congestion and enabling greater uptake of public and active travel, the Millburn Corridor contributes meaningfully to these outcomes. The project ensures better integration between modes by linking active travel routes directly to bus stops and ensuring safe, convenient interchange options. Proximity to Inverness railway station, Inverness Campus, and the city centre also enhances regional connectivity. Wayfinding, improved public realm and safer crossings further support seamless movement between walking, wheeling, cycling and bus travel.
Please provide max 500 words on how the project improves bus journey times and provide greater reliability, by prioritising bus over other types of traffic thereby encouraging mode shift and improved bus services. (Not compulsory, however projects that contribute to this will be prioritised).	The Millburn Corridor project in Inverness delivers significant improvements to bus journey times and service reliability by introducing targeted bus priority measures along one of the city's most important arterial routes. These improvements will make public transport a faster, more dependable, and attractive option for both existing and new users, helping to shift travel behaviour away from private car use. The corridor currently experiences regular congestion, particularly during peak periods, resulting in delays to bus services, irregular headways, and a poor user experience. This unreliability undermines public confidence in bus services and discourages uptake, especially among those who have access to a car. To address these challenges, the project introduces several bus-priority interventions, including: • Dedicated bus lanes and/or sections of bus-only priority at junctions. • Signal optimisation and queue relocation to allow buses to bypass congestion hotspots. • Enhanced bus stop facilities to improve accessibility and boarding times. • Better integration with walking, wheeling and cycling routes to support multi-modal travel. These measures will allow buses to avoid delays caused by general traffic, reducing journey times and improving timetable adherence. A more consistent and predictable service enables operators to run more efficient schedules, potentially increasing service frequency without requiring a proportional increase in fleet or operational costs. By delivering faster and more reliable services, the project makes bus travel a more attractive and competitive alternative to the private car, particularly for commuting and short urban trips. This supports wider modal shift objectives, helping to reduce road congestion, lower transport-related carbon emissions, and improve air quality in the city. The project also plays a vital role in unlocking future improvements to bus services. With improved infrastructure in place, operators will be better positioned to invest in service enhancements, including more frequent buses, extended routes, and potentially greener fleets. Public confidence in the bus network will grow as reliability improves, encouraging greater long-term ridership. In addition, these improvements align with national and regional priorities, including the Highland Bus Service Improvement Partnership (BSIP) and the Highland Local Transport Strategy objectives, which recognise that bus priority is essential for delivering high-quality, sustainable public transport.

Project Name	Millburn Road Corridor
Please provide max 300 words to demonstrate the strength and commitment of and to joint working between Local Transport Authorities and operators to support bus services.	The Highland Council, HITRANS and Bus Operators have a track record of working together to deliver improvements to the bus network in the Highlands. This commitment is evidenced through the voluntary bus partnership, or Bus Service Improvement Plan Partnership, of which the group, have collaboratively published their Service Improvement Plan, which guides service and network improvements for bus throughout the Highland Geography. This partnership is built on shared objectives to improve the reliability, efficiency, and attractiveness of bus services across Inverness and the wider Highland region. The proposals have been developed in close alignment with the Highland Bus Service Improvement Partnership (BSIP), which formalises joint working between transport authorities and operators. Through the BSIP, stakeholders have collectively identified key corridors - such as Millburn - as priorities for bus priority infrastructure investment, ensuring that the measures proposed are rooted in operational insight and passenger need. Regular engagement through the BSIP governance structure has informed the design of the project, with operators providing data, operational feedback, and input on measures to maximise reliability and passenger benefit. This co-development process ensures that infrastructure investment is closely tied to service delivery improvements and operational feasibility. There is a strong, ongoing commitment from all partners to monitor outcomes and adapt services to maximise the benefits of the project. The project is also integrated into wider regional transport planning and supports ambitions for decarbonisation and modal shift. This close collaboration between public and private sector partners demonstrates a unified approach to strengthening public transport, delivering on national and regional transport objectives, and ensuring long-term benefits for communities, including along the Millburn Corridor.
For construction projects over £0.5 million what operator 'match in kind' action and/or investment is proposed?	N/A, however Stagecoach have provided a generic response to MIK for Inverness: Inverness became the first UK City to operate a 100% EV City network. The 25 vehicles cost just over £9m with grant support coming from Scotzeb round 1 funding. In addition, Stagecoach over the last two years have invested a further £12.4m in 64 vehicles that operate around Inverness, the Moray Firth and the wider Highland Region. With the exception of 6 EV Coaches all were fitted with the latest Euro 6 diesel engines. The vehicles were fitted with high back seating, USB ports, AV systems and seatbelts. Over the coming 3 years, they will be investing a further £1.2m in introducing a new livery to the fleet that will also include a new seat padding and moquette and information screens to further improve the perception of the Bus. Stagecoach are currently developing a new ticketing system which we hope to role out in the coming years, to improve the simplicity of ticket transactions and improve the data sourcing to assist further with network and product planning. To improve the on street infrastructure within the City of Inverness and the Highland Region as a whole, we are a significant contributor to funding the additional staffing resources required to rollout an improved Bus Stop infrastructure and information offerings. We are about to spend £250k of improvements to Inverness Bus Station, with new platforms and shelters. Stagecoach have provided resource support in the development of the Highland area BSIPs through internal secondments and will continue to look at providing that support and Partnership as and when needed and where we feel we have expertise to provide that additional support.
For pre-construction projects, does this have elected member buy in? For construction projects, has the project been signed off by the relevant elected members/committee? If not required please state this, or if required, what are the timescales associated with such approvals. (max 300 words)	In principle this project was agreed through the previous committee agreements under BPF however project specifics will be subject to the normal committee process. N/A – project is not yet at construction stage. In principle this project was agreed through the previous committee agreements under BPF however project specifics will be subject to the normal committee process.
Please provide confirmation that should funding be awarded in mid-May 2025 or earlier, that the project can be delivered by the end of March 2026.	Yes preferably by end of April specifically around modelling timing requirements where we would commence in May 2025.

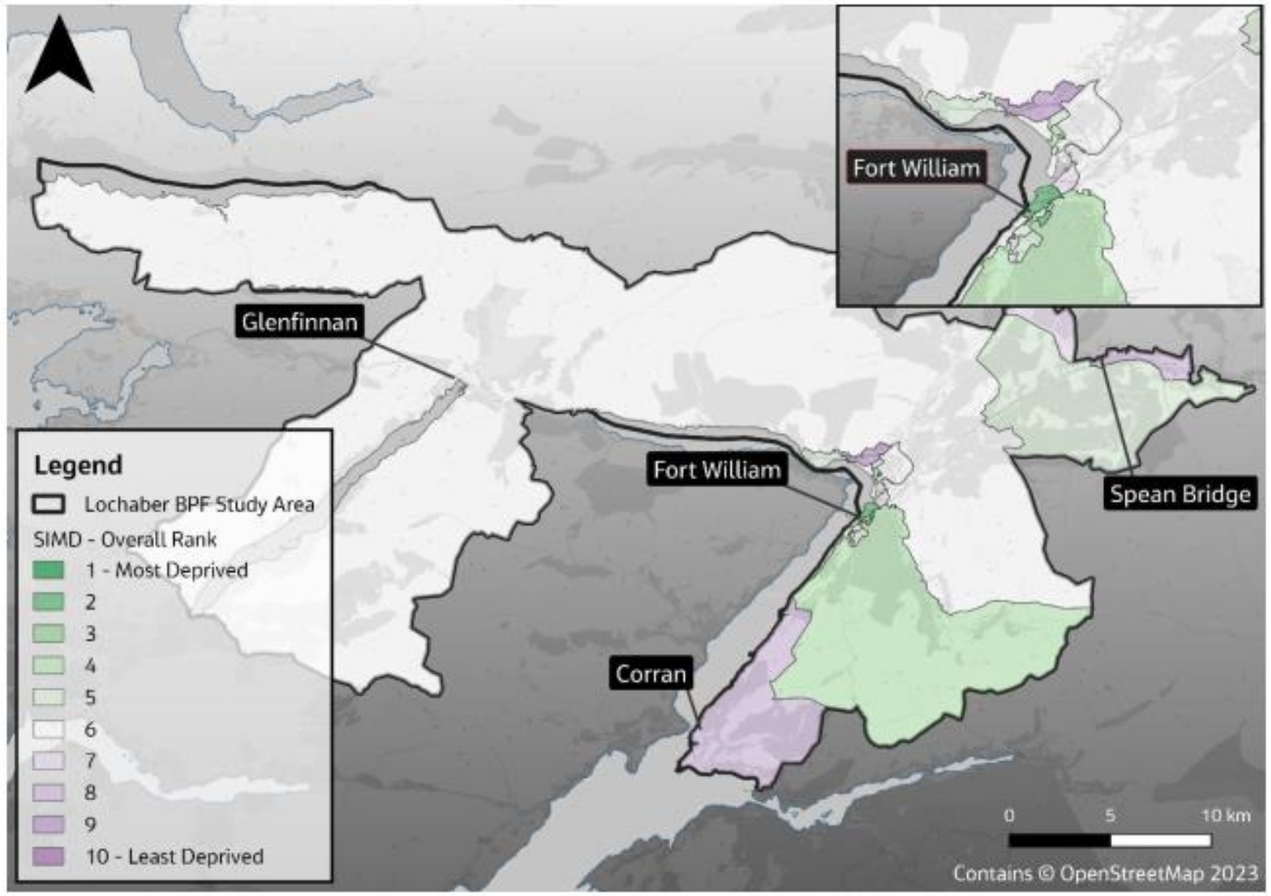
Project Name	Fort William - Blar Mhor Bus Only Link
Questions	**Response**
Voluntary Partnership Priority of Bus Infrastructure Tier 2 Funding Proposals submitted	2
Partnership project contact (Name, job description, organisation, e-mail address and contact details)*	Julie Cromarty Sustainable Transport Team Leader Julie.cromarty@highland.gov.uk 01463 702004
Project manager project contact (Name, job description, organisation, e-mail address and contact details)*	Neil Young Active Travel Manager The Highland Council Neil.Young@highland.gov.uk 01463 702004
I confirm that I have read the privacy policy and consent to the data I provide being used as set out in the policy.	Yes
Project location – co-ordinates	https://maps.app.goo.gl/d7JFFt3mEJRbKf3Q8
Project description	This project proposes a new bus only link between the Fort William Health Centre and new residential development. The location of the link in the context of the existing transport network and surrounding area is shown in the figure below. 
Was this project identified through work undertaken through the Bus Partnership Fund? Please briefly outline details. (max 300 words)	This project was identified as a quick win project by previous work undertaken through the Bus Partnership Fund award to the Highland BSIP. This formed one of two quick win proposals for Lochaber intended to enable bus routes to operate at an early stage of housing development and thereby reduce the need for car dependence in these areas from the outset.
What stage(s) of project are you seeking funding for	Construction.
What is the total amount of funding you need to progress this project in 2025-26?	£510,000 (for construction of revised layout).
What is the total amount of funding you are looking for from the Bus Infrastructure Fund Tier 2?	The estimated cost of the original option is £344,835. This has been reviewed in 2025, and this figure therefore represents an up-to-date estimate. The estimated cost of a revised layout including segregated bus lane from the medical centre car park & involving the movement of parking spaces, is £510,000.

Project Name	Fort William - Blar Mhor Bus Only Link
Is this a multi-year project? Please provide cost details about the project if design or construction will span multiple financial years. If a project is multi-year, please make it clear what is proposed for 2025-26 and what is proposed for subsequent years.	This is a one-year project with an indicative delivery timeframe as follows: • 2025-26: Construct, subject to lease of land being agreed with the landowners. It is estimated that the construction phase of the project would take between eight and twelve weeks.
Please briefly (max 500 words) describe the proposed project. If a project is multi-year, please make it clear what is proposed for 2025-26 and what is proposed for subsequent years.	On the north-east of the A830, there is a large new residential development, medical centre, Lochaber High School and where the site for the new Fort William Hospital is also located. At present there are two separate accesses off the A830. The proposal for this project is to provide a new bus only link between the Blar Mhor housing development (and proposed hospital site) and the medical centre. The proposed bus link/gate was applied for through the Bus Partnership Fund, along with other projects in Fort William, notably an appraisal of options to mitigate the delays to buses caused by congestion on the trunk roads. The opportunity was to provide a new bus only link between the new Blar Mhor housing development (and proposed hospital site) and the medical centre, integrated into the main town service. This would enable both the medical centre and the new housing to be served efficiently, without undue addition to the journey time for passengers. As a result of growing congestion in Fort William, the bus service has already had to be reduced at Corpach and Plantation to maintain service reliability over the route, and it is only possible to serve **either** the medical centre (as at present) **or** the Blar Mhor housing on any journey. The time savings from this measure would enable both locations to be served without detriment to the frequency at the medical centre, allowing passengers on the Blar development to travel into the Town Centre and Corpach. Increasing the resource from three buses to four for the town service is being considered, if funding can be secured, to restore the service frequency to Corpach and Plantation and to serve another growing area of the town. However, even with a fourth bus, the timing is tight to meet all of these needs, so the bus gate remains a crucial part of the infrastructure to enable this to succeed. Discussions are ongoing with the landowners to agree the lease of the land and the link designs drafted by The Highland Council's Principal Design Team. NHS Highland is now involved in the discussions again with the latest meeting held in February 2025. Recent discussions have led to refinement of the original proposal to adjust the layout of parking spaces with the revised design to be shared with the landowners and their tenant (a group of GPs). Further meetings have taken place throughout March & April and The Sustainable Transport Leader awaits further comments due 24/04/25 and will then respond and a final decision between the tenants/landowners/Highland Council/NHS Highland will be made in the coming weeks The implications of this refinement on the existing planning permission is being clarified by the Council's Project Design Unit but is likely to require a variation and not further planning consent. Once agreement is reached, the procurement exercise for the build would begin. It is estimated that the construction phase of the project would take between eight to twelve weeks.
Please briefly (max 300 words) describe the key scheme objectives.	The key objective of the project is to allow the existing bus service to serve key facilities / residential area to the north of Fort William town centre without the need to introduce a new service which could impact on the frequency of the existing offer to maintain operational viability. The Project will allow the existing service to be connected with a new development that is currently unserved and future proof the relocation of the Belford hospital to a site in this area. The key broader direct outcomes desired are to reduce the congestion on the main routes (A82 and A830) and reduce car movements, especially within the urban area and so avoid delays to the bus services. It is intended that by doing this, bus passenger growth will be encouraged and in addition to the core bus services serving local needs, further seasonal routes will be encouraged to tourist attractions in the neighbourhood such as Glen Nevis and Glenfinnan, and the service to Nevis Range enhanced. The link would allow us to access the Blar Mhor estate quicker than by observing current available option. Access to this new housing development provides another area of Fort William to a regular bus service. New patronage will allow for the strengthening of the service with expected growth in numbers. The project also positively contributes to all four of the themes highlighted in FW2040, namely: • Growing Communities: better designed places that are safe, attractive and healthy. • Connectivity and Transport: Safe, reliable and resilient linkages across the town, between communities and between the town and the wider region. • Employment: A diverse, growing and sustainable economy with … an enhanced reputation as a year-round tourism destination. • Environment and Heritage: Carbon efficient local infrastructure.

Project Name	Fort William - Blar Mhor Bus Only Link

Please set out the project management and other staffing or consultancy costs that you anticipate you will need to deliver this project.	The Highland Council is seeking funding towards resource to manage and oversee the delivery of the project, as well as consultancy support. This is as follows:
	
	2025-26
	• THC dedicated project management:
	  ○ BIF Tier 2 Programme Proposals by THC would require 10% project management costs. So if we are awarded all 8 proposals we would require £216,800
	• The Highland Council Design Unit Support and estimated contractor costs for construction:
	  ○ £510,000

What costs associated with the above are you seeking from the Bus Infrastructure Fund Tier 2.	Funding is sought to cover all costs.
How will the project and its development demonstrate value for money/best value? Is the project supported by a business case (where applicable)? (max 300 words)	The project serves as a vital link to allow bus services to continue to service key destinations and a new residential development. The proposed measures support a broader infrastructure first approach to embed sustainable travel behaviour from the outset and avoid the risk of engrained private car travel dominating in the absence of a frequent and reliable bus service to connect new residents with Fort William and surrounding communities. Similarly, the link supports sustainable access to Lochaber High School and healthcare facilities. Prioritising public transport will support wider objectives including: • Reducing carbon emissions and contributing to Inverness's and Highland Council's climate targets. • Improving air quality and public health through more walking, wheeling, and cycling. • Enhancing transport equity, by making travel more accessible to those without access to private vehicles. • Supporting local economic vitality by improving connections to retail, education, and employment opportunities.
For construction projects, please confirm that your projects are construction ready. We are looking for confirmation that these are construction ready e.g. have no outstanding land ownership issues, all permissions are in place, design complete, monitoring and evaluation plan in place, cost estimates finalised, utilities surveys undertaken etc. (max 300 words)	This project at this juncture is not construction ready but we hope to conclude either way over the coming weeks if we cannot secure the lease this financial year we will look to apply for funding again next year. There is political, community and stakeholder commitment, the objections are objections specifically from groups of GP's that are tenants within the medical centre. Planning consent is already in place for this and the TRO is ready to publish. This will remain as a priority commitment of the BSIP Group.
Please provide max 500 words on how the project provides high-quality bus infrastructure which contribute to the four priorities of the National Transport Strategy (NTS2) vision – to reduce inequality, take climate action, help deliver inclusive growth and improve health and well-being.	The project positively contributes to the four NTS priorities as follows: • **Reduce Inequality:** With there being greater reliance on public transport by those who do not own or have access to a private car, investment in bus infrastructure can have a positive impact on enhancing access for all to employment, education, healthcare and other services. It also help negate the problem of forced car ownership in Highland where people feel they do not have an alternative to owning a car due to the lack of and unreliability of bus services. A bus only link would help provide a frequent and reliable service that supports wider aspirations of improving connectivity and accessibility for all. • **Take Climate Action:** In the short-term, greenhouse gas emissions would increase due to construction activities undertaken to construct the bis only link, including indirect emissions from the manufacture and transportation of materials as well as from emissions from fuel combusted by construction vehicles. The infrastructure would be designed to be resilient to predicted impacts arising from current and future weather events and climatic conditions, and designed in accordance with current planning, design, engineering practice, and codes. Mitigation and adaptation measures, including sustainable drainage, would be considered to address potential risks. The ability this project provides operators to revise existing schedules rather than introduce additional vehicles can be expected to positively impact on emissions. • **Help Deliver Inclusive Growth:** Fort William 2040 aims to create a thriving and sustainable town for all. 'A Connected Place' is a central theme with there being a need to maximise opportunities for a diverse range of transport and other connecting networks. A bus only link would help underpin this vision, supporting access to employment and education opportunities as well as healthcare facilities for those who live, work in and visit Lochaber. • **Improve Health and Well-being:** The bus only link can help support a degree of mode shift from private car as bus journey times become more competitive, with the potential for enhanced placemaking from the reduction in traffic. Furthermore, encouraging a mode shift to public transport inherently results in more active journeys as users are required to walk to bus stops/stations, which associated health benefits. A more attractive network underpinned by more reliable journey times that encourages greater usage can in turn provide natural safety from more people using services / waiting facilities.
How does the project positively impact an area of higher deprivation (as identified by the Scottish Index of Multiple Deprivation (SIMD))? Are there any specific impacts on child poverty?	SIMD 2020 data shows that overall, 11% of data zones in the Lochaber BPF area are ranked within the bottom quintile i.e. the 20% most deprived zones across Scotland. Alongside this, 5% of data zones are ranked within the top quintile i.e. the 20% least deprived zones across Scotland suggesting a mix of deprivation. In general, the more densely populated urban areas within Lochaber show higher levels of deprivation. The figure below indicates the overall SIMD decile ranking of data zones within the Lochaber BPF area.

Project Name	Fort William - Blar Mhor Bus Only Link
(max 300 words)	 *Source: Lochaber Bus Partnership Fund Initial Appraisal: Case for Change, April 2023* In summary, the settlements in Lochaber all display some degree of variation in terms of deprivation, with more urban areas such as Fort William showing higher rates of deprivation in comparison to more sparsely populated areas. For households in lower ranked SIMD areas, access to reliable public transport is essential for daily life. By transforming the bus station facility in Fort William, the project enhances the public transport offer available to lower income households. This helps positively contribute to addressing 'transport poverty' where people are excluded from opportunities due to poor or unaffordable transport options. The project is also expected to have a direct, positive impact on child poverty. In areas where families experience lower incomes and limited mobility, access to education, healthcare and social opportunities can be constrained. The public transport infrastructure will enhance the journey experience to access key destinations such as Lochaber High School and healthcare services. By improving the quality of public transport for families without private vehicles, the project helps reduce the disadvantage that transport barriers impose on the life of young people.
Does this project contribute to any Strategic Transport Projects Review 2 recommendations? (max 300 words)	The project contributes to the following STPR2 recommendations: • **Recommendation 14 Provision of strategic bus priority measures:** This recommendation seeks to implement projects targeted at delivering faster and more reliable journey times for bus passengers. The introduction of a bus only link would directly align with this recommendation and support broader efforts to bring forward faster and more reliable journey times for bus passengers in Lochaber. • **Recommendation 21 Improved public transport passenger interchange facilities:** This recommendation seeks to improve public transport passenger facilities, including accessibility and quality enhancements. The STPR2 reporting notes that increasing the quality of passenger facilities would also improve the travel experience, especially benefiting those who do not have access to a car particularly those from the most deprived households. The introduction of a bus only link would support in providing improved bus operations that encourage travel by bus with positive impact on the road network, including the A82 within the vicinity of the bus station.

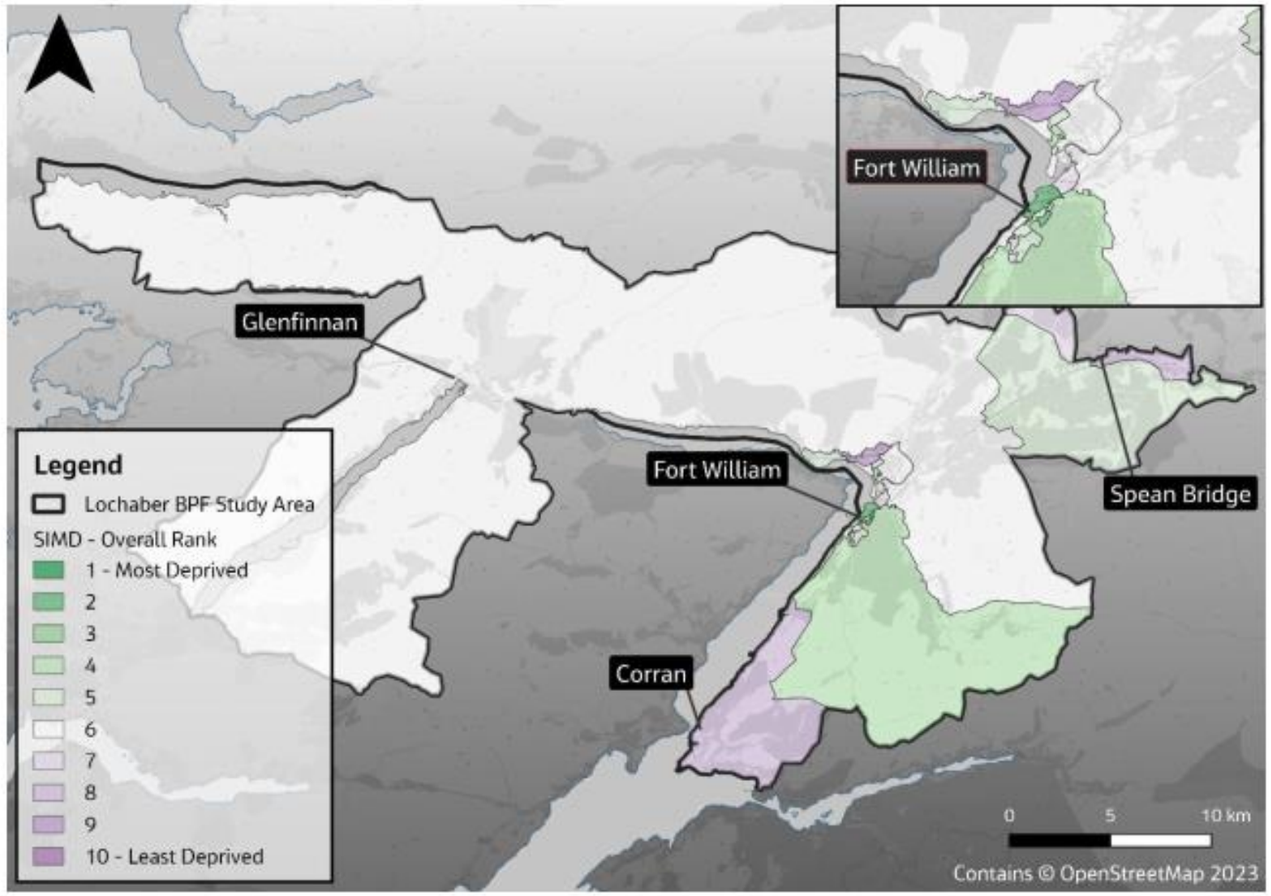
Project Name	Fort William - Blar Mhor Bus Only Link
	• **Recommendation 32 Trunk Road and motorway network renewal for reliability, resilience and safety** – An integrated transport plan for Fort William to increase resilience and reliability on the trunk road to improve sustainable transport and enhance the sense of place in the local community forms part of this recommendation. It is noted within the STPR2 reporting that this could potentially include online and offline improvements on the A82, including a new link road, with the removal of traffic from the already constrained corridor and release of capacity on the existing A82 to become a sustainable travel corridor. The bus only link to help encourage travel by bus to surrounding communities, including Fort William, would serve to complement and further reinforce the aspirations of this recommendation to enhance sustainable transport provision in the town.
Fit with the partnership area's overall strategy for integrated transport, to encourage a modal shift from cars to more sustainable transport modes to reduce emissions.	This project is a key component of the Highland Bus Service Improvement Partnership's (BSIP) wider area strategy to deliver an integrated, low-carbon transport system that reduces car dependency and supports a shift toward more sustainable modes, including public transport, walking, wheeling and cycling. Developed in alignment with the Highland BSIP, HITRANS Regional Transport Strategy and Highland Local Transport Strategy, the project supports the shared ambition to create a well-connected, inclusive and environmentally responsible transport network. By prioritising bus services through journey time improvements that allows operators to maintain service provision, the project addresses a major barrier to modal shift - the competitiveness and reliability of bus services. As the only route through Fort William and between the neighbouring communities of Inverlochy, Corpach and Caol, any delays on the A82 and A830 trunk roads have an immediate impact on all vehicular transport. In the summer months when traffic on this corridor can increase by over 50% so too can journey times. These delays impact on every bus service that use these routes. This seasonal variation means that it is difficult for any bus service (local or long distance) to operate punctually to the same timetable all year round. By improving bus journey times to retain a service offer, this project has an important role as part of a broader package of measures to encourage sustainable travel choices and in doing so help to ease pressure on the existing transport network within and around the Fort William area. In summary, the project is fully aligned with the Highland BSIP's goals for integrated and sustainable transport. It supports long-term modal shift, helps meet net zero targets and plays a vital role in creating a greener, healthier transport system within Fort William and beyond.
Please provide max 500 words on how the project is in line with the National Transport Strategy 2 sustainable travel and investment hierarchies, including to prioritise bus over other types of motorised traffic and ensuring integration with other modes.	This project is firmly aligned with the principles of the National Transport Strategy 2 (NTS2), including the Sustainable Travel Hierarchy and the Sustainable Investment Hierarchy which guide decision-making to prioritise sustainable, inclusive, and environmentally responsible transport modes. **Sustainable Travel Hierarchy** NTS2 places walking, wheeling and cycling at the top of the Sustainable Travel Hierarchy followed by public transport - particularly buses - as preferred alternatives to private car use. This project supports the hierarchy in practice by: • Enhancing bus infrastructure to improve journey times and service operations, making public transport a more attractive choice for residents, workers, patients and school pupils. • Prioritising buses over general traffic, reinforcing bus travel as the more efficient mode. • Complementing other measures to improve and prioritise the sustainable travel offer in surrounding areas, in particular Fort William. • Instilling an infrastructure first approach to support sustainable travel choices and behaviour in favour of private car as the mode of choice. By delivering a bus only link where bus users are clearly prioritised over general motorised traffic, the project directly supports the NTS2 vision for a transport system that reduces car dependency and encourages more sustainable, healthy travel behaviours. **Sustainable Investment Hierarchy** The Sustainable Investment Hierarchy prioritises maintaining and optimising existing infrastructure, then making better use of the network, before considering new infrastructure investment. The project reflects the investment hierarchy by: • Targeting proportionate infrastructure investment from the outset to avoid the risk of potential larger scale interventions being required to respond to issues rather than mitigating against them arising in the first place. • Integrating public transport provision from the outset to enhance efficiency for operators and accessibility for the travelling passenger. • Delivering best value by investing in targeted improvements that unlock wider network benefits across the transport system in Lochaber. The project also aligns with the investment hierarchy's goal of supporting broader policy objectives, including decarbonisation, air quality improvement, and social inclusion. By supporting bus operations to serve needs, the project contributes meaningfully to these outcomes.
Please provide max 500 words on how the project improves bus journey times and provide greater reliability, by prioritising bus over other types of traffic thereby encouraging mode shift and improved bus services. (Not compulsory, however projects that contribute to this will be prioritised).	On the north-east of the A830, there is a large new residential development, medical centre, Lochaber High School and the site for the new Hospital. At present these sites have two separate accesses off the A830. The proposal for this project is to provide a new bus only link between the new Blar Mhor housing development (and proposed hospital site) and the medical centre. As a result of the time savings from this measure, the local bus operator would be able to serve both destinations and maintain the current timetable frequency without the need to incur the costs of an additional bus working. The bus only link would provide journey time and service provision benefits for buses serving key healthcare and education facilities. The link would benefit healthcare workers, patients, staff and pupils at Lochaber High School as well as residents. This would help to encourage travel by bus in favour of private car and in doing so reduce the pressure on the A82 and A830 which are heavily trafficked and experience seasonal variation in journey times.

Project Name	Fort William - Blar Mhor Bus Only Link
	As the only route through Fort William and between the neighbouring communities of Inverlochy, Corpach and Caol, any delays on the A82 and A830 trunk roads have an immediate impact on all vehicular transport. In the summer months when traffic on this corridor can increase by over 50% so too can journey times. These delays impact on every bus service using the routes. This seasonal variation means that it is difficult for any bus service (local or long distance) to operate punctually to the same timetable all year round. Analysis has indicated seasonal variation with southbound journey times on the A82 through Fort William in excess of 50% higher in the summer peak. This increase in journey time is not restricted to the morning and evening commute peak period but rather extends from around 1100 -1800.
Please provide max 300 words to demonstrate the strength and commitment of and to joint working between Local Transport Authorities and operators to support bus services.	The Highland Council, HITRANS and bus operators have a track record of working together to deliver improvements to the transport network in the Highlands. This commitment is evidenced through the voluntary Highland Bus Service Improvement Partnership (BSIP) underpinned by the partnership's Service Improvement Plan which guides service and network improvements for bus throughout the Highland geography. The BSIP is built on shared objectives to improve the reliability, efficiency and attractiveness of bus services across Lochaber and the wider Highland region. On 5 May 2021 the Highland Council Infrastructure, Environment & Economy Committee agreed to the Council initiating a BSIP in Highland. The partnership comprises the following members: • Highlands & Islands Enterprise. • HITRANS. • Shiel Buses. • Stagecoach. • The Highland Council. The Highland BSIP is independently chaired by a respected figure who has held several senior management roles in the bus industry. Through the Highland BSIP, stakeholders have collectively identified priority corridors / areas for bus infrastructure investment, ensuring that measures are rooted in operational insight and passenger need to provide a targeted response to achieve success. Regular engagement through the BSIP governance structure has informed the design of the project with operators providing data, operational feedback and input to maximise reliability and passenger benefit. This co-development process ensures that infrastructure investment is closely tied to service delivery improvements and operational feasibility. There is a strong, ongoing commitment from all partners to monitor outcomes and adapt services to maximise the benefits of the project. The project is also integrated into wider regional transport planning and supports ambitions for decarbonisation and modal shift. This close collaboration between public and private sector partners demonstrates a unified approach to strengthening public transport, delivering on national, regional as well as local transport objectives and ensuring long-term benefits for communities across Highland.
For construction projects over £0.5 million what operator 'match in kind' action and/or investment is proposed?	The match in kind from the operator is generic as this is a contracted services rather than commercially operated and is as follows: to commit to maintaining their ticketing range, online information provision, vehicle investment standards, vehicle cleanliness, driver training etc.
For pre-construction projects, does this have elected member buy in? For construction projects, has the project been signed off by the relevant elected members/committee? If not required please state this, or if required, what are the timescales associated with such approvals. (max 300 words)	Yes, as per previous BPF projects that went through various committees. N/A – project is not at construction stage.
Please provide confirmation that should funding be awarded in mid-May 2025 or earlier, that the project can be delivered by the end of March 2026.	Yes

Project Name	Fort William – Upper Achintore Bus only Link
Questions	**Response**
Voluntary Partnership Priority of Bus Infrastructure Tier 2 Funding Proposals submitted	3
Partnership project contact (Name, job description, organisation, e-mail address and contact details)*	Julie Cromarty Sustainable Transport Team Leader Julie.cromarty@highland.gov.uk 01463 702004
Project manager project contact (Name, job description, organisation, e-mail address and contact details)*	Neil Young Active Travel Manager The Highland Council Neil.Young@highland.gov.uk 01463 702004
I confirm that I have read the privacy policy and consent to the data I provide being used as set out in the policy.	Yes
Project location – co-ordinates	https://www.google.com/maps/@56.8141608,-5.1076224,866m/data=!3m1!1e3?authuser=0&entry=ttu&g_ep=EgoyMDI1MDQxNC4xIKXMDSoASAFQAw%3D%3D
Project description	The current road pattern does not enable a bus route to serve the new residential development at Upper Achintore (Heathercroft Drive) and the older housing around Lochaber Road, where there is a well-established bus route. Introducing a new bus only link between the new residential development and Lochaber Road would enable both developments to be served by the same service thus removing the need for an additional bus working as well as the added benefit of improve connectivity between the two residential areas and Fort William town centre.
Was this project identified through work undertaken through the Bus Partnership Fund? Please briefly outline details. (max 300 words)	This project was identified by previous work undertaken through the Bus Partnership Fund award to the Highland BSIP. The project was identified as a quick win in the Highland BSIP BPF funding application submitted in 2021. This formed one of two quick win proposals intended to enable bus routes to operate at an early stage of housing development and thereby reduce the need for car dependence in these areas from the outset. The application noted that contributions would be sought from developers towards the operation of the bus services. The project did receive funding as part of the BPF award to the Highland BSIP.
What stage(s) of project are you seeking funding for	Construction.
What is the total amount of funding you need to progress this project in 2025-26?	£268,000
What is the total amount of funding you are looking for from the Bus Infrastructure Fund Tier 2?	All of the costs
Is this a multi-year project? Please provide cost details about the project if design or construction will span multiple financial years. If a project is multi-year, please make it clear what is proposed for 2025-26 and what is proposed for subsequent years.	This is a two-year project with an indicative delivery timeframe as follows: • 2025-26: Planning, Detailed design, TRO, Procurement, Phase 1 construction £268,000 • 2026-2027 Phase 2 construction £524,121.00. It is estimated that the construction overall will take 4-6 months but split over 2 financial years, we need further discussion but likely we procure for 2 phases of construction 1st in 25/26 and the 2nd phase 26/27. We would estimate completion August/Sept 2026.
Please briefly (max 500 words) describe the proposed project. If a project is multi-year, please make it clear what is proposed for 2025-26 and what is proposed for subsequent years.	This project for a bus-only link between residential areas in Fort William aims to improve local connectivity, reduce car dependence, and promote sustainable urban transport. The current road pattern does not enable a bus route to serve the new residential development at Upper Achintore (Heathercroft Drive) and the older housing around Lochaber Road, where there is a well-established bus route. Introducing a new bus only link between the new residential development and Lochaber Road would enable both developments to be served by the same service thus removing the need for an additional bus working as well as the added benefit of improve connectivity between the two residential areas and Fort William town centre. The project aims to: • Improve public transport access and efficiency • Reduce private car use and traffic congestion • Enhance safety and air quality • Promote environmentally sustainable mobility

Project Name	Fort William – Upper Achintore Bus only Link
	
Please briefly (max 300 words) describe the key scheme objectives.	The key objective of the project is to allow the existing bus service to serve a new residential development with Fort William town centre without the need to introduce a new service which could impact on the frequency of the existing offer to maintain operational viability. The key broader direct outcomes desired are to reduce the congestion on the main routes (A82 and A830) and reduce car movements, especially within the urban area and so avoid delays to the bus services. It is intended that by doing this, bus passenger growth will be encouraged and in addition to the core bus services serving local needs, further seasonal routes will be encouraged to tourist attractions in the neighbourhood such as Glen Nevis and Glenfinnan, and the service to Nevis Range enhanced. It is also hoped that infrastructure improvements will move the core bus services closer towards commercial viability. The project also positively contributes to all four of the themes highlighted in FW2040, namely: • Growing Communities: better designed places that are safe, attractive and healthy. • Connectivity and Transport: Safe, reliable and resilient linkages across the town, between communities and between the town and the wider region. • Employment: A diverse, growing and sustainable economy with … an enhanced reputation as a year-round tourism destination. • Environment and Heritage: Carbon efficient local infrastructure.
Please set out the project management and other staffing or consultancy costs that you anticipate you will need to deliver this project.	The Highland Council is seeking funding towards resource to manage and oversee the delivery of the project, as well as consultancy support. This is as follows: 2025-26 • THC dedicated project management: ○ BIF Tier 2 Programme Proposals by THC would require 10% project management costs. So if we are awarded all 8 proposals we would require £216,800 • Planning, Detailed design, TRO, Procurement, Phase 1 Construction Cost £268,000
What costs associated with the above are you seeking from the Bus Infrastructure Fund Tier 2.	Funding is sought to cover all costs.

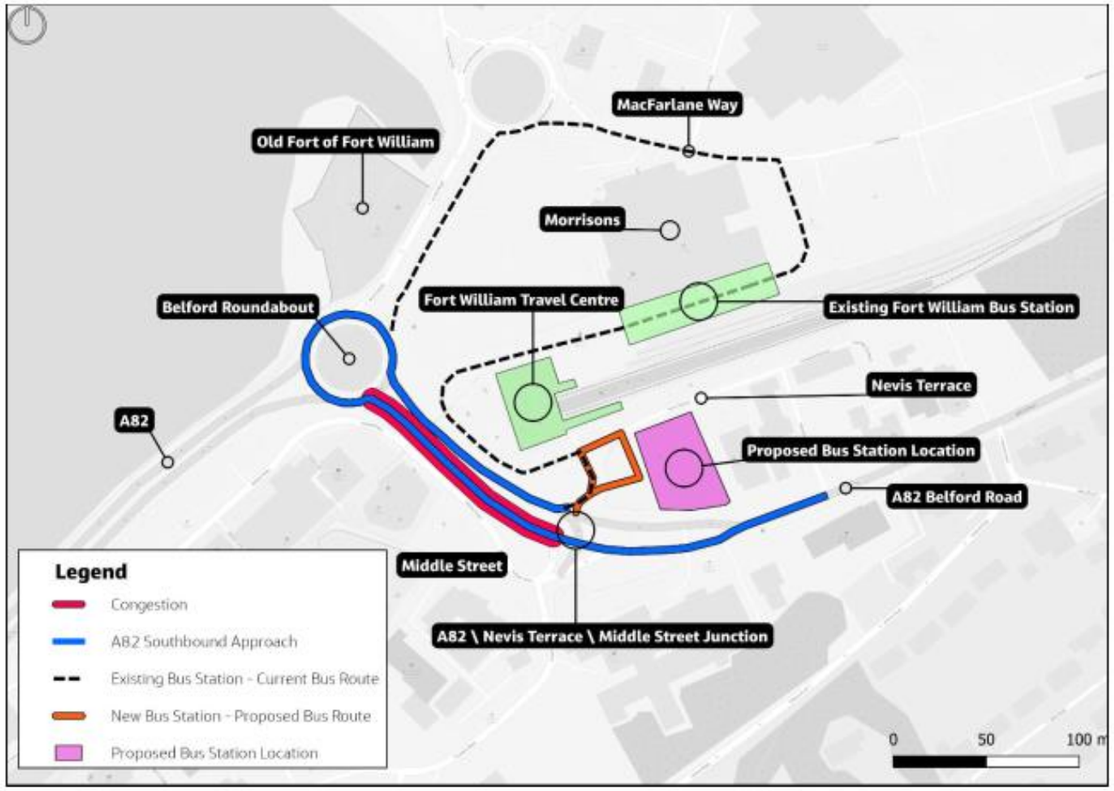
Project Name	Fort William – Upper Achintore Bus only Link
How will the project and its development demonstrate value for money/best value? Is the project supported by a business case (where applicable)? (max 300 words)	The project serves as a vital link to allow bus services to continue to service key destinations and a new residential development without the need for additional vehicles to be deployed which may have an impact on service frequency of existing / new services to maintain operational viability. The proposed measures support a broader infrastructure first approach to embed sustainable travel behaviour from the outset and avoid the risk of engrained private car travel dominating in the absence of a frequent and reliable bus service to connect new residents with Fort William and surrounding communities. Similarly, the link supports sustainable access to Lochaber High School and healthcare facilities. Prioritising public transport will support wider objectives including: • Reducing carbon emissions and contributing to Inverness's and Highland Council's climate targets. • Improving air quality and public health through more walking, wheeling, and cycling. • Enhancing transport equity, by making travel more accessible to those without access to private vehicles. • Supporting local economic vitality by improving connections to retail, education, and employment opportunities.
For construction projects, please confirm that your projects are construction ready. We are looking for confirmation that these are construction ready e.g. have no outstanding land ownership issues, all permissions are in place, design complete, monitoring and evaluation plan in place, cost estimates finalised, utilities surveys undertaken etc. (max 300 words)	N/A – project is not construction ready.
Please provide max 500 words on how the project provides high-quality bus infrastructure which contribute to the four priorities of the National Transport Strategy (NTS2) vision – to reduce inequality, take climate action, help deliver inclusive growth and improve health and well-being.	The project positively contributes to the four NTS priorities as follows: • **Reduce Inequality:** With there being greater reliance on public transport by those who do not own or have access to a private car, investment in bus infrastructure can have a positive impact on enhancing access for all to employment, education, healthcare and other services. It also help negate the problem of forced car ownership in Highland where people feel they do not have an alternative to owning a car due to the lack of and unreliability of bus services. A bus only link would help provide a frequent and reliable service that supports wider aspirations of improving connectivity and accessibility for all. • **Take Climate Action:** In the short-term, greenhouse gas emissions would increase due to construction activities undertaken to construct the bis only link, including indirect emissions from the manufacture and transportation of materials as well as from emissions from fuel combusted by construction vehicles. The infrastructure would be designed to be resilient to predicted impacts arising from current and future weather events and climatic conditions, and designed in accordance with current planning, design, engineering practice, and codes. Mitigation and adaptation measures, including sustainable drainage, would be considered to address potential risks. The ability this project provides operators to revise existing schedules rather than introduce additional vehicles can be expected to positively impact on emissions. • **Help Deliver Inclusive Growth:** Fort William 2040 aims to create a thriving and sustainable town for all. 'A Connected Place' is a central theme with there being a need to maximise opportunities for a diverse range of transport and other connecting networks. A bus only link would help underpin this vision, supporting access to employment and education opportunities as well as healthcare facilities for those who live, work in and visit Lochaber. • **Improve Health and Well-being:** The bus only link can help support a degree of mode shift from private car as bus journey times become more competitive, with the potential for enhanced placemaking from the reduction in traffic. Furthermore, encouraging a mode shift to public transport inherently results in more active journeys as users are required to walk to bus stops/stations, which associated health benefits. A more attractive network underpinned by more reliable journey times that encourages greater usage can in turn provide natural safety from more people using services / waiting facilities.
How does the project positively impact an area of higher deprivation (as identified by the Scottish Index of Multiple Deprivation (SIMD))? Are there any specific impacts on child poverty? (max 300 words)	SIMD 2020 data shows that overall, 11% of data zones in the Lochaber BPF area are ranked within the bottom quintile i.e. the 20% most deprived zones across Scotland. Alongside this, 5% of data zones are ranked within the top quintile i.e. the 20% least deprived zones across Scotland suggesting a mix of deprivation. In general, the more densely populated urban areas within Lochaber show higher levels of deprivation. The figure below indicates the overall SIMD decile ranking of data zones within the Lochaber BPF area.

Project Name	Fort William – Upper Achintore Bus only Link
	 *Source: Lochaber Bus Partnership Fund Initial Appraisal: Case for Change, April 2023* In summary, the settlements in Lochaber all display some degree of variation in terms of deprivation, with more urban areas such as Fort William showing higher rates of deprivation in comparison to more sparsely populated areas. For households in lower ranked SIMD areas, access to reliable public transport is essential for daily life. By transforming the bus station facility in Fort William, the project enhances the public transport offer available to lower income households. This helps positively contribute to addressing 'transport poverty' where people are excluded from opportunities due to poor or unaffordable transport options. The project is also expected to have a direct, positive impact on child poverty. In areas where families experience lower incomes and limited mobility, access to education, healthcare and social opportunities can be constrained. The public transport infrastructure will enhance the journey experience to access key destinations such as Lochaber High School and healthcare services. By improving the quality of public transport for families without private vehicles, the project helps reduce the disadvantage that transport barriers impose on the life of young people.
Does this project contribute to any Strategic Transport Projects Review 2 recommendations? (max 300 words)	The project contributes to the following STPR2 recommendations: • **Recommendation 14 Provision of strategic bus priority measures:** This recommendation seeks to implement projects targeted at delivering faster and more reliable journey times for bus passengers. The introduction of a bus only link would directly align with this recommendation and support broader efforts to bring forward faster and more reliable journey times for bus passengers in Lochaber. • **Recommendation 21 Improved public transport passenger interchange facilities:** This recommendation seeks to improve public transport passenger facilities, including accessibility and quality enhancements. The STPR2 reporting notes that increasing the quality of passenger facilities would also improve the travel experience, especially benefiting those who do not have access to a car particularly those from the most deprived households. The introduction of a bus only link would support in providing improved bus operations that encourage travel by bus with positive impact on the road network, including the A82 within the vicinity of the bus station.

Project Name	Fort William – Upper Achintore Bus only Link
	• **Recommendation 32 Trunk Road and motorway network renewal for reliability, resilience and safety** – An integrated transport plan for Fort William to increase resilience and reliability on the trunk road to improve sustainable transport and enhance the sense of place in the local community forms part of this recommendation. It is noted within the STPR2 reporting that this could potentially include online and offline improvements on the A82, including a new link road, with the removal of traffic from the already constrained corridor and release of capacity on the existing A82 to become a sustainable travel corridor. The bus only link to help encourage travel by bus to surrounding communities, including Fort William, would serve to complement and further reinforce the aspirations of this recommendation to enhance sustainable transport provision in the town.
Fit with the partnership area's overall strategy for integrated transport, to encourage a modal shift from cars to more sustainable transport modes to reduce emissions.	This project is a key component of the Highland Bus Service Improvement Partnership's (BSIP) wider area strategy to deliver an integrated, low-carbon transport system that reduces car dependency and supports a shift toward more sustainable modes, including public transport, walking, wheeling and cycling. Developed in alignment with the Highland BSIP, HITRANS Regional Transport Strategy and Highland Local Transport Strategy, the project supports the shared ambition to create a well-connected, inclusive and environmentally responsible transport network. By prioritising bus services through journey time improvements that allows operators to maintain service provision, the project addresses a major barrier to modal shift - the competitiveness and reliability of bus services. As the only route through Fort William and between the neighbouring communities of Inverlochy, Corpach and Caol, any delays on the A82 and A830 trunk roads have an immediate impact on all vehicular transport. In the summer months when traffic on this corridor can increase by over 50% so too can journey times. These delays impact on every bus service that use these routes. This seasonal variation means that it is difficult for any bus service (local or long distance) to operate punctually to the same timetable all year round. By improving bus journey times to retain a service offer, this project has an important role as part of a broader package of measures to encourage sustainable travel choices and in doing so help to ease pressure on the existing transport network within and around the Fort William area. In summary, the project is fully aligned with the Highland BSIP's goals for integrated and sustainable transport. It supports long-term modal shift, helps meet net zero targets and plays a vital role in creating a greener, healthier transport system within Fort William and beyond.
Please provide max 500 words on how the project is in line with the National Transport Strategy 2 sustainable travel and investment hierarchies, including to prioritise bus over other types of motorised traffic and ensuring integration with other modes.	This project is firmly aligned with the principles of the National Transport Strategy 2 (NTS2), including the Sustainable Travel Hierarchy and the Sustainable Investment Hierarchy which guide decision-making to prioritise sustainable, inclusive, and environmentally responsible transport modes. **Sustainable Travel Hierarchy** NTS2 places walking, wheeling and cycling at the top of the Sustainable Travel Hierarchy followed by public transport - particularly buses - as preferred alternatives to private car use. This project supports the hierarchy in practice by: • Enhancing bus infrastructure to improve journey times and service operations, making public transport a more attractive choice for residents, workers, patients and school pupils. • Prioritising buses over general traffic, reinforcing bus travel as the more efficient mode. • Complementing other measures to improve and prioritise the sustainable travel offer in surrounding areas, in particular Fort William. • Instilling an infrastructure first approach to support sustainable travel choices and behaviour in favour of private car as the mode of choice. By delivering a bus only link where bus users are clearly prioritised over general motorised traffic, the project directly supports the NTS2 vision for a transport system that reduces car dependency and encourages more sustainable, healthy travel behaviours. **Sustainable Investment Hierarchy** The Sustainable Investment Hierarchy prioritises maintaining and optimising existing infrastructure, then making better use of the network, before considering new infrastructure investment. The project reflects the investment hierarchy by: • Targeting proportionate infrastructure investment from the outset to avoid the risk of potential larger scale interventions being required to respond to issues rather than mitigating against them arising in the first place. • Integrating public transport provision from the outset to enhance efficiency for operators and accessibility for the travelling passenger. • Delivering best value by investing in targeted improvements that unlock wider network benefits across the transport system in Lochaber. The project also aligns with the investment hierarchy's goal of supporting broader policy objectives, including decarbonisation, air quality improvement, and social inclusion. By supporting bus operations to serve needs, the project contributes meaningfully to these outcomes.
Please provide max 500 words on how the project improves bus journey times and provide greater reliability, by prioritising bus over other types of traffic thereby encouraging mode shift and improved bus services. (Not compulsory, however projects that contribute to this will be prioritised).	On the north-east of the A830, there is a large new residential development, medical centre, Lochaber High School and the site for the new Hospital. At present these sites have two separate accesses off the A830. The proposal for this project is to provide a new bus only link between the new Blar Mhor housing development (and proposed hospital site) and the medical centre. As a result of the time savings from this measure, the local bus operator would be able to serve both destinations and maintain the current timetable frequency without the need to incur the costs of an additional bus working. The bus only link would provide journey time and service provision benefits for buses serving key healthcare and education facilities. The link would benefit healthcare workers, patients, staff and pupils at Lochaber High School as well as residents. This would help to encourage travel by bus in favour of private car and in doing so reduce the pressure on the A82 and A830 which are heavily trafficked and experience seasonal variation in journey times.

Project Name	Fort William – Upper Achintore Bus only Link
	As the only route through Fort William and between the neighbouring communities of Inverlochy, Corpach and Caol, any delays on the A82 and A830 trunk roads have an immediate impact on all vehicular transport. In the summer months when traffic on this corridor can increase by over 50% so too can journey times. These delays impact on every bus service using the routes. This seasonal variation means that it is difficult for any bus service (local or long distance) to operate punctually to the same timetable all year round. Analysis has indicated seasonal variation with southbound journey times on the A82 through Fort William in excess of 50% higher in the summer peak. This increase in journey time is not restricted to the morning and evening commute peak period, but rather extends from around 1100 -1800.
Please provide max 300 words to demonstrate the strength and commitment of and to joint working between Local Transport Authorities and operators to support bus services.	The Highland Council, HITRANS and bus operators have a track record of working together to deliver improvements to the transport network in the Highlands. This commitment is evidenced through the voluntary Highland Bus Service Improvement Partnership (BSIP) underpinned by the partnership's Service Improvement Plan which guides service and network improvements for bus throughout the Highland geography. The BSIP is built on shared objectives to improve the reliability, efficiency and attractiveness of bus services across Lochaber and the wider Highland region. On 5 May 2021 the Highland Council Infrastructure, Environment & Economy Committee agreed to the Council initiating a BSIP in Highland. The partnership comprises the following members: • Highlands & Islands Enterprise. • HITRANS. • Shiel Buses. • Stagecoach. • The Highland Council. The Highland BSIP is independently chaired by a respected figure who has held several senior management roles in the bus industry. Through the Highland BSIP, stakeholders have collectively identified priority corridors / areas for bus infrastructure investment, ensuring that measures are rooted in operational insight and passenger need to provide a targeted response to achieve success. Regular engagement through the BSIP governance structure has informed the design of the project with operators providing data, operational feedback and input to maximise reliability and passenger benefit. This co-development process ensures that infrastructure investment is closely tied to service delivery improvements and operational feasibility. There is a strong, ongoing commitment from all partners to monitor outcomes and adapt services to maximise the benefits of the project. The project is also integrated into wider regional transport planning and supports ambitions for decarbonisation and modal shift. This close collaboration between public and private sector partners demonstrates a unified approach to strengthening public transport, delivering on national, regional as well as local transport objectives and ensuring long-term benefits for communities across Highland.
For construction projects over £0.5 million what operator 'match in kind' action and/or investment is proposed?	N/A 25/26
For pre-construction projects, does this have elected member buy in? For construction projects, has the project been signed off by the relevant elected members/committee? If not required please state this, or if required, what are the timescales associated with such approvals. (max 300 words)	Yes as per previous Committee reports through BPF. N/A – project is not at construction stage but we would aim to complete phase 1 of construction 25/26.
Please provide confirmation that should funding be awarded in mid-May 2025 or earlier, that the project can be delivered by the end of March 2026.	Yes

Project Name	Fort William – A82 / Nevis Terrace / Middle Street Junction Reconfiguration (incl. signalisation with bus priority)
Questions	**Response**
Voluntary Partnership Priority of Bus Infrastructure Tier 2 Funding Proposals submitted	4
Partnership project contact (Name, job description, organisation, e-mail address and contact details)*	Julie Cromarty Sustainable Transport Team Leader Julie.cromarty@highland.gov.uk 01463 702004
Project manager project contact (Name, job description, organisation, e-mail address and contact details)*	Neil Young Active Travel Manager The Highland Council Neil.Young@highland.gov.uk 01463 702004
I confirm that I have read the privacy policy and consent to the data I provide being used as set out in the policy.	Yes
Project location – co-ordinates	https://maps.app.goo.gl/eLDhkUtgaT545UDJ7
Project description	This project would reconfigure the junction between the A82 / Nevis Terrace / Middle Street involving the removal of the central reserve to allow buses to turn right from Middle Street to the A82 and from the A82 to Nevis Terrace, providing access to the bus station for southbound A82 traffic. Buses from Middle Street would also be able to travel straight across the junction to Nevis Terrace and onto the bus station. The junction would be signalised to provide bus priority for these movements, removing any delay from this right turn movement. The junction improvement in the wider context of the surrounding area and related proposal to relocate the bus station (which forms a separate BIF application) is illustrated in the figure below.



Source: Lochaber Bus Partnership Fund Appraisal Report, April 2023

In summary, the reconfiguration of the junction between the A82 / Nevis Terrace / Middle Street to remove the central reserve will allow buses to:

- Turn right from Middle Street to the A82 northbound.
- Turn right from the A82 southbound to Nevis Terrace (providing direct access to the bus station for southbound A82 traffic).

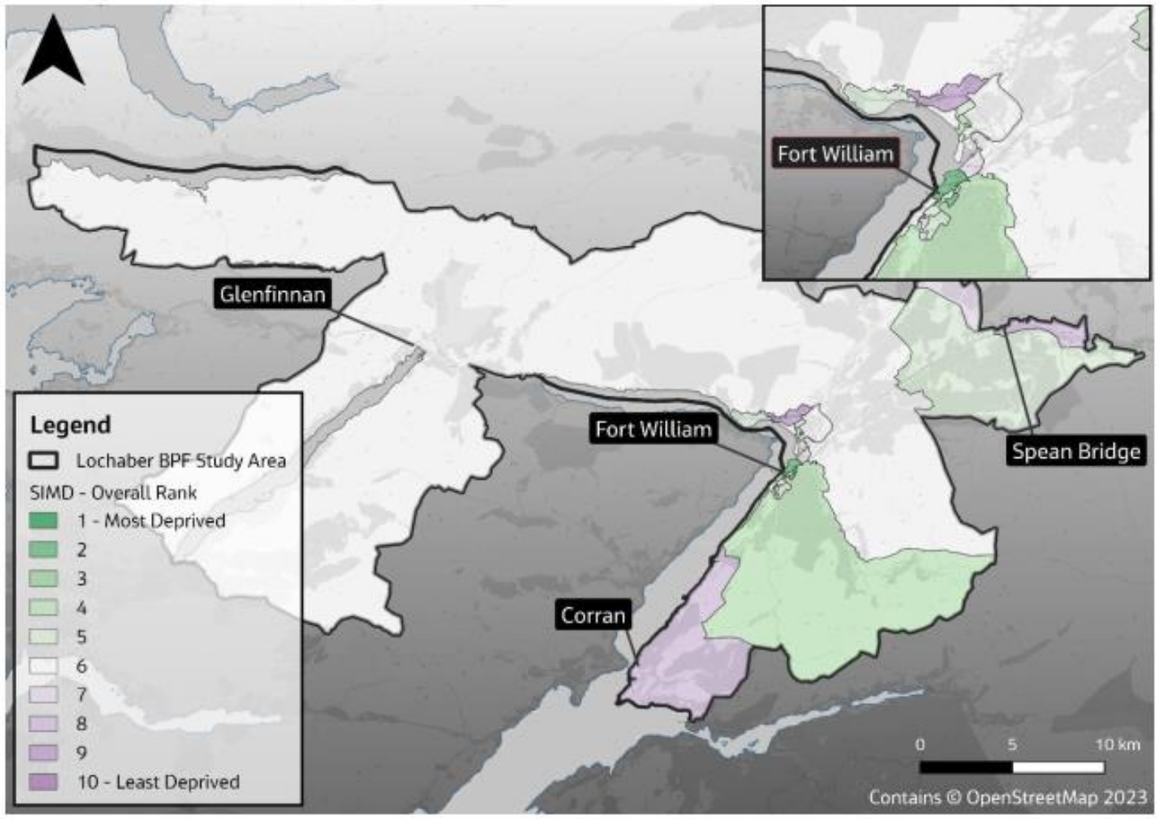
Project Name	Fort William – A82 / Nevis Terrace / Middle Street Junction Reconfiguration (incl. signalisation with bus priority)
	• Travel straight across the A82 from Middle Street to Nevis Terrace. • Turn right / left from Nevis Terrace onto the A82 northbound / southbound (once the bus station is relocated).
Was this project identified through work undertaken through the Bus Partnership Fund? Please briefly outline details. (max 300 words)	The reconfiguration of the A82 / Nevis Terrace / Middle Street junction forms part of 'Package 3 - A82 / Nevis Terrace / Middle Street Junction Bus Priority and Bus Station Upgrades' which emerged from the Lochaber Bus Partnership Fund (BPF) appraisal study that reported in April 2023. The study involved an appraisal (following Scottish Transport Appraisal Guidance (STAG)) of bus-based options for the Lochaber area of Highland. The study highlighted the current situation of buses travelling on the A82 southbound to the bus station having to route south on the A82 to Belford Roundabout and complete a U-turn to then access the bus station from the A82 via Nevis Terrace. Similarly, local services wishing to travel north on the A82 from Middle Street currently need to turn left from Middle Street onto the A82 southbound, before performing a U-turn at Belford Roundabout to travel northbound on the A82. This project would remove the need for this U-turn in both instances. Furthermore, the Lochaber BPF appraisal reported that congestion can negatively impact upon bus journey times and journey time reliability. As the only route through Fort William and between the neighbouring communities of Inverlochy, Corpach and Caol, any delays on the A82 and A830 trunk roads have an immediate impact on all vehicular transport. In the summer months when traffic on this corridor can increase by over 50% so too can journey times. These delays impact on every bus service travelling on these routes. This seasonal variation means that it is difficult for any bus service (local or long distance) to operate punctually to the same timetable all year round. The southbound approach on the A82 to Belford Roundabout is an area identified as representing a point of delay during the summer peak, with queuing and congestion on approach delaying buses which is highlighted red on the figure above. The situation is compounded by the situation previously described of buses being required to undertake a U-turn and travel north toward Nevis Terrace, adding to journey times.
What stage(s) of project are you seeking funding for	Design development (including junction modelling).
What is the total amount of funding you need to progress this project in 2025-26?	£200,000 (for design and junction modelling).
What is the total amount of funding you are looking for from the Bus Infrastructure Fund Tier 2?	The Lochaber transport appraisal estimated a cost of £8m to £10m for Package 3, including the relocation of the bus station and A82 / Nevis Terrace / Middle Street Junction improvement to introduce priority for buses. An estimated cost for the junction reconfiguration will be defined as part of the further design and modelling work to be progressed in 2025-26. This will take account of construction costs as well as maintenance and enforcement costs.
Is this a multi-year project? Please provide cost details about the project if design or construction will span multiple financial years. If a project is multi-year, please make it clear what is proposed for 2025-26 and what is proposed for subsequent years.	This is a multi-year project with an indicative delivery timeframe as follows: • 2025-26: Design development informed by junction modelling. • 2026-27: Planning, TRO and construction phase (this may extend into 2027-28). Future steps and timing will need to align with wider projects and policy, including the FW2040 Masterplan, Fort William Integrated Transport Plan and Highland Wide Local Development Plan.
Please briefly (max 500 words) describe the proposed project. If a project is multi-year, please make it clear what is proposed for 2025-26 and what is proposed for subsequent years.	The problems, opportunities, issues and constraints experienced by the bus network in Lochaber and supporting infrastructure as well as users of the services are well understood through the Lochaber BPF appraisal. The next stage for this project is centred on further progressing the design to reconfigure the A82 / Nevis Terrace / Middle Street junction, informed by junction modelling: **Stage 1 Existing Operational Review:** A proportionate baselining exercise will be undertaken to ensure the project is underpinned by a cohesive and up to date evidence base of the existing situation and future circumstances. This will include: • Junction / road network operation at / within the vicinity of the A82 / Nevis Terrace / Middle Street Junction. • Current levels of walking and cycling at / within the vicinity of the A82 / Nevis Terrace / Middle Street Junction. **Stage 2 Junction Design:** A layout for a new junction design will be developed informed by Stage 1 and in line with the principle of removing the central reserve to allow buses to: • Turn right from Middle Street to the A82 northbound. • Turn right from the A82 southbound to Nevis Terrace (providing direct access to the bus station for southbound A82 traffic). • Travel straight across the A82 from Middle Street to Nevis Terrace. • Turn right / left from Nevis Terrace onto the A82 northbound / southbound (once the bus station is relocated) Should the bus station remain in its current location, the new junction would provide access from both the A82 northbound and southbound but egress would remain as per the existing situation. In this circumstance the junction would require a realignment of Nevis Terrace, and in doing so it is the intention that this would be designed in from the outset to allow sufficient width and the appropriate geometry for buses to exit the new bus station location directly onto the A82 should the proposal to relocate the bus station be progressed. This approach will future proof the junction in connection with changes to the location of the bus station and avoid the need for retrospective modification in the future. The junction would be signalised with priority for bus movements. The design will consider provision for non-motorised users crossing the A82 Belford Road. This is particularly key with the existing arrangement of local bus services utilising Middle Street and longer distance services operating to / from the bus station.

Project Name	Fort William – A82 / Nevis Terrace / Middle Street Junction Reconfiguration (incl. signalisation with bus priority)
	Stage 3 Testing: The junction design will be tested. This will assess the impact on different road users in line with standard metrics. The operational impact on other junctions will also be tested to capture potential re-routeing. These will be defined, but could include for example the A82 / High Street, A82 Belford Road Roundabout, A82 / Victoria Road, Victoria Road / Fassifern Road junctions. The testing will be undertaken with the bus station retained in the existing location and relocated to Nevis Terrace car park. The outputs will provide an operational snapshot at the junction level. Stakeholder engagement will continue to be a backbone with input sought to help shape as well as gather feedback on design concepts. Ongoing interaction of the BSIP with others, including the FW2040 project team as well as Transport Scotland will be key. The progress of this project will be intrinsically linked to the other project focused on relocating the bus station to ensure the new station layout and junction layout align to optimise access and egress arrangements for bus services as well as for non-motorised users crossing to / from the bus station area.
Please briefly (max 300 words) describe the key scheme objectives.	The key aims and outcomes of the Lochaber BPF appraisal were to: • Afford significant priority to buses over other forms of motorised transport. • Improve the punctuality and reliability of bus services. • Aid in increasing bus patronage. The Transport Planning Objectives are as follows: • To reduce average southbound bus journey times within the six-hour peak period (12pm to 6pm), May to September, between the A830 at Corpach and Belford Roundabout to within 2 minutes (20%) of the 2019 annual average journey time by 2026. • Improve integration between local and long bus services, with 80% of local services stopping points being within 100m of longer distance stopping points by 2026, compared to a 2019 service baseline. • Reduce traffic volumes within the six-hour peak period (12pm to 6pm) between May and September by 480 vehicles (10%) by 2030 when compared with the 2019 August baseline traffic volumes, on the A82 southbound between the A830 and Nevis Junction by encouraging mode shift to sustainable modes. Package 3, including the relocated bus station and bus priority at the A82 / Nevis Terrace / Middle Street Junction, was scored to have a major positive impact on the service integration objective. This reflects provision of bus priority at the A82 / Nevis Terrace / Middle Street Junction, combined with a new bus station encouraging more local services to use the bus station, helping to reduce barriers between local and long-distance services and improve integration between services.

Please set out the project management and other staffing or consultancy costs that you anticipate you will need to deliver this project.	The Highland Council is seeking funding towards resource to manage and oversee the delivery of the project, as well as consultancy support. This is as follows:
	
	2025-26
	• THC dedicated project management:
	  ○ BIF Tier 2 Programme Proposals by THC would require 10% project management costs. So if we are awarded all 8 proposals we would require £216,800
	• Consultancy Support:
	  ○ Design and junction modelling £200,000.
	
	It should be noted that this project is on the trunk road network but as verbally agreed between HC & TS in December 2024 the HC will take on project management of this project, but this is subject to HC being given adequate access to TS personnel and commitment from TS personnel to the emerging project timeline.

What costs associated with the above are you seeking from the Bus Infrastructure Fund Tier 2.	Support is sought for all costs to be covered.
How will the project and its development demonstrate value for money/best value? Is the project supported by a business case (where applicable)? (max 300 words)	A full economic assessment to calculate the Transport Economic Efficiency (TEE) was not undertaken as part of the Lochaber BPF appraisal due to uncertainty over the junction layout. A high-level economic assessment of Package 3 was however undertaken and this projected there would be delay to general traffic, leading to disbenefits in the order of £3m over a 60-year period. Anticipated benefits to bus users were forecast with journey time savings of approximately 30 seconds in the off-peak and up to 2 minutes in the peak which would result in an estimated benefit to bus passengers over a 60-year appraisal of between £1m and £2m. These impacts are largely influenced by the introduction of bus priority at the A82 / Nevis Terrace / Middle Street. Prioritising public transport will have wider impacts with associated benefits: • Reducing carbon emissions and contributing to The Highland Council's climate targets. • Enhancing transport equity, by making travel more accessible to those without access to private vehicles. • Improving air quality and public health through modal shift to more sustainable modes. • Supporting local economic vitality by improving connections to employment, education and leisure opportunities. It will be important that the final design carefully considers access for all users, including those with mobility impairments as well as neurodivergent members of the community, and that high-quality design principles are upheld throughout to ensure comfort and safety for all.

Project Name	Fort William – A82 / Nevis Terrace / Middle Street Junction Reconfiguration (incl. signalisation with bus priority)
For construction projects, please confirm that your projects are construction ready. We are looking for confirmation that these are construction ready e.g. have no outstanding land ownership issues, all permissions are in place, design complete, monitoring and evaluation plan in place, cost estimates finalised, utilities surveys undertaken etc. (max 300 words)	N/A – project is not construction ready.
Please provide max 500 words on how the project provides high-quality bus infrastructure which contribute to the four priorities of the National Transport Strategy (NTS2) vision – to reduce inequality, take climate action, help deliver inclusive growth and improve health and well-being.	The project positively contributes to the four NTS priorities as follows: • **Reduce Inequality:** With there being greater reliance on public transport by those who do not own or have access to a private car, investment in bus infrastructure can have a positive impact on enhancing access for all to employment, education, healthcare and other services. It also help negate the problem of forced car ownership in Highland where people feel they do not have an alternative to owning a car due to the lack of and unreliability of bus services. A reconfigured junction and associated positive impact on bus journey times would directly benefit bus users, including passengers from lower income households who can be more reliant on public transport to access opportunities and services. • **Take Climate Action:** In the short-term, greenhouse gas emissions would increase due to construction activities undertaken to reconfigure the junction, including indirect emissions from the manufacture and transportation of materials as well as from emissions from fuel combusted by construction vehicles. The infrastructure would be designed to be resilient to predicted impacts arising from current and future weather events and climatic conditions, and designed in accordance with current planning, design, engineering practice, and codes. Mitigation and adaptation measures, including sustainable drainage, would be considered to address potential risks. The improved access for buses can be expected to positively impact on emissions from reducing operating times. The potential for general traffic to re-route to avoid the junction could pose a risk to off-set the benefits realised from bus services operating on the network. • **Help Deliver Inclusive Growth:** Fort William 2040 aims to create a thriving and sustainable town for all. 'A Connected Place' is a central theme with there being a need to maximise opportunities for a diverse range of transport and other connecting networks. A reconfigured junction with bus priority would help underpin this vision, supporting access to employment and education opportunities as well as sustainable tourism across the Lochaber area. • **Improve Health and Well-being:** The provision of bus priority measures may result in a degree of mode shift from private car as bus journey times become more competitive, with the potential for enhanced placemaking from the reduction in traffic. Furthermore, encouraging a mode shift to public transport inherently results in more active journeys as users are required to walk to bus stops/stations, which associated health benefits. A more attractive network underpinned by more reliable journey times that encourages greater usage can in turn provide natural safety from more people using services / waiting facilities.
How does the project positively impact an area of higher deprivation (as identified by the Scottish Index of Multiple Deprivation (SIMD))? Are there any specific impacts on child poverty? (max 300 words)	SIMD 2020 data shows that overall, 11% of data zones in the Lochaber BPF area are ranked within the bottom quintile i.e. the 20% most deprived zones across Scotland. Alongside this, 5% of data zones are ranked within the top quintile i.e. the 20% least deprived zones across Scotland suggesting a mix of deprivation. In general, the more densely populated urban areas within Lochaber show higher levels of deprivation. The figure below indicates the overall SIMD decile ranking of data zones within the Lochaber BPF area.

Project Name	Fort William – A82 / Nevis Terrace / Middle Street Junction Reconfiguration (incl. signalisation with bus priority)
	 *Source: Lochaber Bus Partnership Fund Initial Appraisal: Case for Change, April 2023* In summary, the settlements in Lochaber all display some degree of variation in terms of deprivation with more urban areas such as Fort William showing higher rates of deprivation in comparison to more sparsely populated areas. For households in lower ranked SIMD areas, access to reliable public transport is essential for daily life. By prioritising buses and improving service efficiency at a key junction on the A82, the project reduces journey times and makes public transport more reliable for users from lower income households. This helps positively contribute to addressing 'transport poverty' where people are excluded from opportunities due to poor or unaffordable transport options. The project is also expected to have a direct, positive impact on child poverty. In areas where families experience lower incomes and limited mobility, access to education, healthcare and social opportunities can be constrained. The public transport infrastructure will enhance connectivity to key destinations such as Lochaber High School and healthcare services. By improving bus services for families without private vehicles, the project helps reduce the disadvantage that transport barriers impose on the life chances of young people.
Does this project contribute to any Strategic Transport Projects Review 2 recommendations? (max 300 words)	The project contributes to the following STPR2 recommendations: • **Recommendation 14 Provision of strategic bus priority measures:** This recommendation seeks to implement schemes targeted at delivering faster and more reliable journey times for bus passengers. The introduction of a reconfigured junction with bus priority would directly align with this recommendation and support broader efforts to bring forward faster and more reliable journey times for bus passengers. • **Recommendation 21 Improved public transport passenger interchange facilities:** This recommendation seeks to improve public transport passenger facilities, including accessibility and quality enhancements. The STPR2 reporting notes that increasing the quality of passenger facilities would also improve the travel experience, especially benefiting those who do not have access to a car particularly those from the most deprived households. The introduction of a reconfigured junction with bus priority would support in providing improved access for bus services as well as users to an enhanced bus station in Fort William. • **Recommendation 32 Trunk road and motorway network renewal for reliability, resilience and safety** – An integrated transport plan for Fort William to increase resilience and reliability on the trunk road to improve sustainable transport and enhance the sense of place in the local community forms part of this recommendation. It is noted within the STPR2 reporting that this could potentially include online and offline improvements on the A82, including a new link road, with the removal of traffic from the already constrained corridor and release of capacity on the existing A82 to become a sustainable travel corridor. The

Project Name	Fort William – A82 / Nevis Terrace / Middle Street Junction Reconfiguration (incl. signalisation with bus priority)
	reconfiguration of the A82 / Nevis Terrace / Middle Street Junction with bus priority built-in would serve to complement and further reinforce the aspirations of this recommendation to enhance sustainable transport provision in Fort William.
Fit with the partnership area's overall strategy for integrated transport, to encourage a modal shift from cars to more sustainable transport modes to reduce emissions.	This project is a key component of the Highland Bus Service Improvement Partnership's (BSIP) wider area strategy to deliver an integrated, low-carbon transport system that reduces car dependency and supports a shift toward more sustainable modes, including public transport, walking, wheeling and cycling. Developed in alignment with the Highland BSIP, HITRANS Regional Transport Strategy and Highland Local Transport Strategy, the project supports the shared ambition to create a well-connected, inclusive and environmentally responsible transport network. By prioritising bus services through journey time improvements, the project addresses a major barrier to modal shift - the competitiveness and reliability of bus services. As the only route through Fort William and between the neighbouring communities of Inverlochy, Corpach and Caol, any delays on the A82 and A830 trunk roads have an immediate impact on all vehicular transport. In the summer months when traffic on this corridor can increase by over 50% so too can journey times. These delays impact on every bus service using these routes. This seasonal variation means that it is difficult for any bus service (local or long distance) to operate punctually to the same timetable all year round. By improving access to / from the bus station and incorporating bus priority signals, this project has a critical role in the quality and attractiveness of bus as a mode of transport. In summary, the project is fully aligned with the Highland BSIP's goals for integrated and sustainable transport. It supports long-term modal shift, helps meet net zero targets and plays a vital role in creating a greener, healthier transport system within Fort William and beyond.
Please provide max 500 words on how the project is in line with the National Transport Strategy 2 sustainable travel and investment hierarchies, including to prioritise bus over other types of motorised traffic and ensuring integration with other modes.	This project is firmly aligned with the principles of the National Transport Strategy 2 (NTS2), including the Sustainable Travel Hierarchy and the Sustainable Investment Hierarchy which guide decision-making to prioritise sustainable, inclusive, and environmentally responsible transport modes. **Sustainable Travel Hierarchy** NTS2 places walking, wheeling and cycling at the top of the Sustainable Travel Hierarchy followed by public transport - particularly buses - as preferred alternatives to private car use. This project supports the hierarchy in practice by: • Enhancing bus infrastructure to improve journey times and reliability, making public transport a more attractive choice for residents, workers and visitors. • Prioritising buses over general traffic through junction improvements, reinforcing bus travel as the more efficient mode. • Creating the opportunity for safer, more inclusive spaces for those walking, wheeling and cycling. • Improving active travel integration with longer distance public transport trips. By delivering a junction improvement where bus users are clearly prioritised over general motorised traffic and provision for non-motorised users integral to the design, the project directly supports the NTS2 vision for a transport system that reduces car dependency and encourages more sustainable, healthy travel behaviours. **Sustainable Investment Hierarchy** The Sustainable Investment Hierarchy prioritises maintaining and optimising existing infrastructure, then making better use of the network, before considering new infrastructure investment. The project reflects the investment hierarchy by: • Optimising road space use by introducing access changes and priority movements in favour of bus, and identifying opportunities to also build-in improvements for non-motorised users. • Delivering best value by investing in targeted improvements that unlock wider network benefits across the town's transport system. The project also aligns with the investment hierarchy's goal of supporting broader policy objectives, including decarbonisation, air quality improvement, and social inclusion. By improving bus journey times and enabling greater uptake of public transport, the project contributes meaningfully to these outcomes. The project seeks to ensure timely and reliable access that brings better integration between local and longer distance bus services as well as by linking safer crossing provision on desire lines to further support seamless movement between walking, wheeling, cycling and bus travel.
Please provide max 500 words on how the project improves bus journey times and provide greater reliability, by prioritising bus over other types of traffic thereby encouraging mode shift and improved bus services. (Not compulsory, however projects that contribute to this will be prioritised).	As the only route through Fort William and between the neighbouring communities of Inverlochy, Corpach and Caol, any delays on the A82 and A830 trunk roads have an immediate impact on all vehicular transport. In the summer months when traffic on this corridor can increase by over 50% so too can journey times. These delays impact on every bus service using these routes. This seasonal variation means that it is difficult for any bus service (local or long distance) to operate punctually to the same timetable all year round. Stakeholder engagement undertaken as part of the Lochaber BPF appraisal highlighted that bus operators attribute bus journey time reliability issues to the congestion on these routes in the summer months. Congestion can be exacerbated by the recent growing number of events held in Fort William, linked to tourism and its growing brand as the Outdoor Capital of the UK. These events can attract thousands of spectators, such as the Mountain Bike World Cup in late May / early June which attracts in the region of 22,000 spectators as well as large numbers of participants and supporting organisations / businesses. Through the provision of bus priority signals, this project is anticipated to reduce conflicts between buses and general traffic, reducing delay, delivering journey time savings and improving journey time reliability for buses at the A82 / Nevis Terrace / Middle Street Junction, mainly during peak periods. This project would specifically improve journey times for buses accessing Nevis Terrace and the bus station from the A82 southbound and services exiting Middle Street to the A82 northbound.

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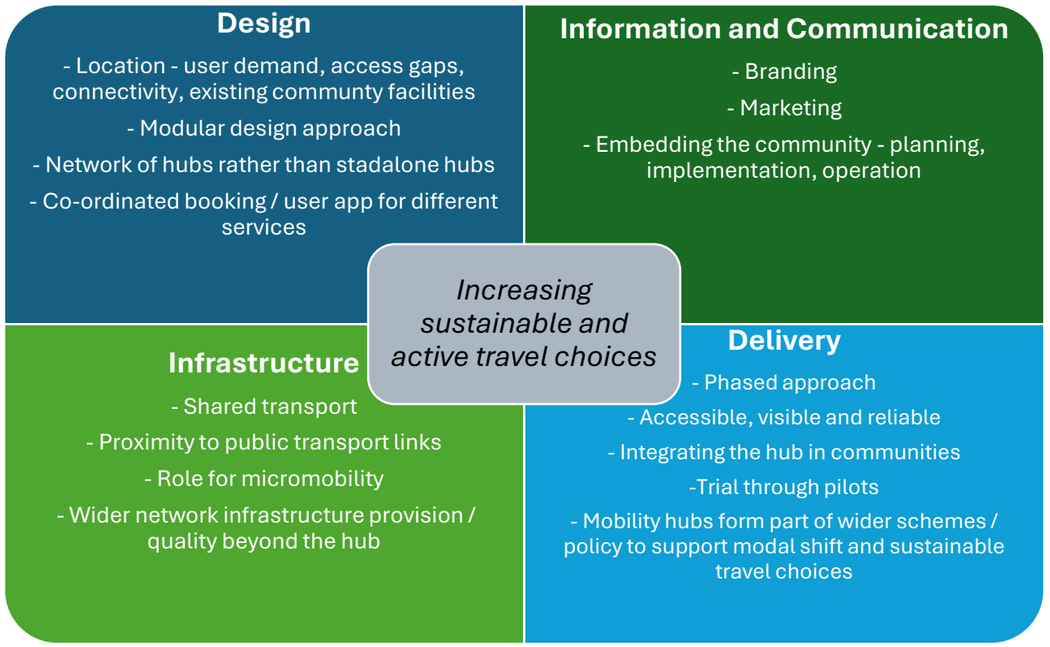
	Whilst this project would provide journey time benefits for the majority of bus services within Fort William, it would not have a direct impact on journey times between the A830 at Corpach and Belford Roundabout. It does however remove the need for services to travel through Belford Roundabout to access the bus station, where queuing can occur on approach. It would also improve bus journey times by providing more direct access to the bus station from the A82. The project would reduce journey times for southbound services accessing Fort William Bus Station, by up to two minutes during peak periods whilst also providing journey time savings of between one and two minutes for local services routing from Middle Street to the A82 northbound. Reducing journey times and improving journey time reliability for buses entering the bus station and exiting Middle Street should encourage a degree of mode shift to public transport leading to a reduction in traffic volumes on the A82 southbound, particularly during peak periods when congestion is most severe. Whilst this project on its own would not achieve the desired traffic volume reduction of 10% on the A82 (in the peak period by 2030 compared to a 2019 baseline), it is anticipated to positively contribute towards this objective.
Please provide max 300 words to demonstrate the strength and commitment of and to joint working between Local Transport Authorities and operators to support bus services.	The Highland Council, HITRANS and bus operators have a track record of working together to deliver improvements to the transport network in the Highlands. This commitment is evidenced through the voluntary Highland Bus Service Improvement Partnership (BSIP) underpinned by the partnership's Service Improvement Plan which guides service and network improvements for bus throughout the Highland geography. The BSIP is built on shared objectives to improve the reliability, efficiency and attractiveness of bus services across Lochaber and the wider Highland region. On 5 May 2021 the Highland Council Infrastructure, Environment & Economy Committee agreed to the Council initiating a BSIP in Highland. The partnership comprises the following members: • Highlands & Islands Enterprise. • HITRANS. • Shiel Buses. • Stagecoach. • The Highland Council. The Highland BSIP is independently chaired by a respected figure who has held several senior management roles in the bus industry. Through the Highland BSIP, stakeholders have collectively identified priority corridors / areas for bus infrastructure investment, ensuring that measures are rooted in operational insight and passenger need to provide a targeted response to achieve success. Regular engagement through the BSIP governance structure has informed the project with operators providing data, operational feedback and input to maximise reliability and passenger benefit. This co-development process ensures that infrastructure investment is closely tied to service delivery improvements and operational feasibility. There is a strong, ongoing commitment from all partners to monitor outcomes and adapt services to maximise the benefits of the project. The project is also integrated into wider regional transport planning and supports ambitions for decarbonisation and modal shift. This close collaboration between public and private sector partners demonstrates a unified approach to strengthening public transport, delivering on national, regional as well as local transport objectives and ensuring long-term benefits for communities across Highland.
For construction projects over £0.5 million what operator 'match in kind' action and/or investment is proposed?	N/A – project is not at construction stage.
For pre-construction projects, does this have elected member buy in? For construction projects, has the project been signed off by the relevant elected members/committee? If not required please state this, or if required, what are the timescales associated with such approvals. (max 300 words)	Yes through the previous BPF committee reports on the Lochaber STAG Appraisal and we assume there is commitment as this is a trunk road asset that HC are delivering on behalf of Transport Scotland. N/A – project is not at construction stage.
Please provide confirmation that should funding be awarded in mid-May 2025 or earlier, that the project can be delivered by the end of March 2026.	Yes

Project Name	Mobility Hub Network
Questions	**Response**
Voluntary Partnership Priority of Bus Infrastructure Tier 2 Funding Proposals submitted	5
Partnership project contact (Name, job description, organisation, e-mail address and contact details)*	Julie Cromarty Sustainable Transport Team Leader Julie.cromarty@highland.gov.uk 01463 702004
Project manager project contact (Name, job description, organisation, e-mail address and contact details)*	Neil Young Active Travel Manager The Highland Council Neil.Young@highland.gov.uk 01463 702004
I confirm that I have read the privacy policy and consent to the data I provide being used as set out in the policy.	Yes
Project location – co-ordinates	Specific sites to be confirmed. Current possible strategic mobility hub locations for consideration include: • Dalcross - https://maps.app.goo.gl/ma9jrrH22cDNGV5a7 • UHI campus - https://maps.app.goo.gl/xMSshMxkBF26tm3m9 • Longman A82 / A9 - https://maps.app.goo.gl/zqFNY5rtYywMyiUu8 or Longman (Inverness Caledonian Thistle football Club) - https://maps.app.goo.gl/KzQzMYqw9KDdDsx69
Project description	This project builds on previous BPF work and a follow-on research piece focused on best practice and success factors to the design, implementation and operation of mobility hubs. The research was commissioned by The Highland Council, in recognition that for mobility hubs to operate successfully, best practice and independent advice was required to frame the most appropriate function, approach and next steps. It examined mobility hubs in other parts of Scotland, wider UK and internationally to inform the development of a Mobility Hub Implementation Plan for Highland that will meet user needs, deliver transformational change for everyone who lives, works in and visits Highland. The focus of this project is to implement the recommendations emerging from this recent research piece and structure this into a Mobility Hub Implementation Plan for Highland.
Was this project identified through work undertaken through the Bus Partnership Fund? Please briefly outline details. (max 300 words)	The Connecting Inverness appraisal formed part of previous work undertaken through the Bus Partnership Fund to take forward an appraisal of bus focused options within Inverness and the immediate surrounds. The appraisal was undertaken in line with the Scottish Transport Appraisal Guidance (STAG) to build upon previous work already undertaken by The Highland Council and Partners. A key corridor between North Kessock and Rose Street formed the area of focus and encompassed a broader strategic overview of opportunity locations for inter-connectivity of modes. The options emerging included candidate sites for a mobility hub, some of which were sifted out for deliverability and operational reasons with five taken forward to detailed appraisal. Five packages were identified through the Connecting Inverness appraisal. Central to each was an interchange hub at strategic locations that also accommodates parking to capture those travelling from rural areas where journeys by bus are more difficult and less attractive due to frequency and reliability concerns, accompanied by network priority in most instances to support the competitiveness of bus compared to other modes. The packages are summarised as follows: • Package 1: Tore Transport Hub and A82 Longman Road physical bus priority. • Package 2: North Kessock Transport Hub and A82 Longman Road physical bus priority. • Package 3: Smithton Trasport Hub and Millburn Road corridor. • Package 4: Torvean Transport Hub and signals upgrade (SCOOT). • Package 5: Milton of Leys Transport Hub and B9006 Corridor. Following this work the Council implemented a mobility hub at Torvean, supported by further BPF funding, which opened in May 2024. They also commissioned a study, funded through BPF, in December 2023 to further explore the feasibility of developing a mobility hub to the north of Kessock Bridge with the emerging work focusing on a site within Tore. The Council commissioned a research piece in March 2025 to gather a greater understanding of the success factors to mobility hubs and principles to underpin a successful delivery model for Highland. This research work was wholly funded by the Council and highlighted the absolute need for mobility hubs to be implemented in their truest form and provide a transport mix tailored to needs and demand.
What stage(s) of project are you seeking funding for	Feasibility and design.
What is the total amount of funding you need to progress this project in 2025-26?	£200,000

Project Name	Mobility Hub Network
What is the total amount of funding you are looking for from the Bus Infrastructure Fund Tier 2?	£200,000 Further funding to be defined on completion of the works set out for 2025-26 which will also be informed by further work The Highland Council has been progressing in the interim to identify possible other sites, informed by stakeholder engagement. This includes potential sites at Dalcross (forming part of the existing rail station facility), Longman (potentially in the vicinity of the Caledonian Thistle Football Club or A82 / A9 Longman junction) and UHI campus. It is not proposed to include Tore in further considerations at this stage with a pre-planning application submitted for a commercial development, including a low carbon hub, to the west of Tore Roundabout which means there is currently uncertainty about the future direction of a potential mobility hub at this location. This planning application will be taken to committee in August 2025.
Is this a multi-year project? Please provide cost details about the project if design or construction will span multiple financial years. If a project is multi-year, please make it clear what is proposed for 2025-26 and what is proposed for subsequent years.	This is a multi-year project with an indicative delivery timeframe as follows: • 2025-26: Highland Mobility Hub Implementation Plan and design development. • 2026-27: Detailed design / pilots implemented. • 2027-28: Pilot phase. • 2028-30: Fuller roll-out (subject to outcome of Pilot phase).
Please briefly (max 500 words) describe the proposed project. If a project is multi-year, please make it clear what is proposed for 2025-26 and what is proposed for subsequent years.	The problems, opportunities, issues and constraints experienced by the bus network and supporting infrastructure as well as users of the services / facilities in Inverness and the wider Highland area are well understood through the Connecting Inverness BPF appraisal. In relation to mobility hubs, this has been further advanced through a research study with a specific focus on understanding the success factors underpinning their design, implementation and ongoing operation. The next stage for this project is centred on further progressing the development of a Mobility Hub Implementation Plan for Highland, informed by a research study recently commissioned by the Council as well as learning from live delivery of a mobility hub at Torvean in 2024. This will be undertaken as a staged approach, with direct consideration of the success factors identified through the aforementioned research study summarised below:  • **Stage 1 Mobility Hub Site Identification Framework:** This will be framed with key criteria informed by the case studies, guidance and delivery lessons identified through the aforementioned research study. Broader socio-economic factors, such as locational SIMD ranking, will also be factored into such a framework. • **Stage 2 Mobility Hub Site Optioneering:** This will incorporate future potential candidate sites already identified by the Council (including at Dalcross, Longman and UHI) as well as others, recognising the different type of mobility hub typologies aligned to a tiered network approach that is not orientated with a car / bus interchange focus but rather centred on mobility hubs with the fullest user mix underpinned by shared transport and linked to sites internal to Inverness not just on the periphery. It will also include potential private led site opportunities, recognising that delivery does not have to be a wholly public sector enterprise – for example, new residential developments provide the opportunity to embed a mobility hub offer to new residents that is developer driven but operating under a consistent brand and service provider model to support cross-hub network integration.

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	• **Stage 3 Application of Site Identification Framework:** This will seek to sift potential candidate sites identified through Stage 2 to determine a short-list of possible sites suitable for mobility hub provision through a Pilot based approach. The exact geography will be driven by the sites emerging, but this could potentially include a focus on Inverness as well as a more rural geography within Highland. • **Stage 4 Pilot Definition:** The output of stage 3 will be drawn on to inform the shaping of a mobility hub Pilot, including definition of site network, transport elements, non-transport elements. This will include identification of Pilot wide activities necessary to promote the Pilot. • **Stage 5 Design:** Development of designs for short-listed Pilot sites. This will consider the mix of service provision and associated scale, including both transport and non-transport elements and their placement / layout on site. Stakeholder engagement will be a backbone to the work to help identify sites that meet user need as well as conducive to public transport operations. Community input also has a role to shape possible locations as well as what people would like to see on offer at a mobility hub.
Please briefly (max 300 words) describe the key scheme objectives.	The overarching purpose of the project is to develop a mobility hub concept tailored to Highland that will facilitate improved access and connectivity by bringing together different modes of transport, including shared transport and public transport links, to encourage a shift away from private car and greater reliance on public transport. Specific objectives include to: • Support modal shift by encouraging a transition from private car use to sustainable modes like walking, cycling, shared mobility, and public transport. • Enhance connectivity by improving first/last mile connections, linking residential areas, employment, education facilities, healthcare facilities and transport interchanges. • Enable easy transfers between different modes of transport. • Promote inclusive access to transport for all demographics, including rural communities, lower income households and people with mobility challenges. • Contribute to net zero goals by integrating low-carbon transport options such as e-bikes, EV car clubs and public transport. • Support local economic activity by positioning hubs to support local businesses, increase footfall and strengthen neighbourhood centres through placemaking.
Please set out the project management and other staffing or consultancy costs that you anticipate you will need to deliver this project.	The Highland Council is seeking funding towards resource to manage and oversee the delivery of the project, as well as consultancy support. This is as follows: 2025-26 • THC dedicated project management: ○ BIF Tier 2 Programme Proposals by THC would require 10% project management costs. So if we are awarded all 8 proposals we would require £216,800 • Consultancy Support: £200,000.
What costs associated with the above are you seeking from the Bus Infrastructure Fund Tier 2.	Support is sought for all costs to be covered.
How will the project and its development demonstrate value for money/best value? Is the project supported by a business case (where applicable)? (max 300 words)	This project provides the opportunity to transform travel through a network of mobility hubs that are tailored to local circumstances and underpinned by core principles. The emergence of the Inverness and Cromarty Green Freeport as a national growth engine is catalysing a period of unprecedented economic opportunity in the Highland region. Over £40 billion in investment is projected between now and 2040, with transformational industrial developments already underway — including nearly £800 million private investment by Sumitomo Electrical at Nigg and the major redevelopment at Ardersier by Haventus. To realise the full benefits of this growth, Inverness must address an urgent and emerging need: reverse commuting patterns between new and existing housing developments in the city and the expanding industrial zones to the north and east. The Inverness and Cromarty Green Freeport designation is unlocking large-scale investments in energy, advanced manufacturing, and renewables. Key projects include: • Sumitomo Electrical at Nigg – £350 million investment and hundreds of skilled jobs • Haventus at Ardersier – major port and offshore infrastructure development costing £400million. • Additional Freeport-linked projects across the Moray Firth coast Regional growth and demographics estimate 9,260 additional working-age people are projected to move into the Highland Council area by 2040 (RTO estimate).£40 billion of investment is planned in the Highland Council area alone in the next 15 years as the region will be home to Scotland's most significant industrial opportunity in decades. These are set out in a Regional Transformational Opportunities report to be published following the Convention of the Highlands and Islands in May 2025.Many of these new residents will settle in Inverness, where housing development is most viable and in demand. This is creating new outbound commuter flows, reversing traditional peak patterns.

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	A strategic network of Mobility Hubs in Inverness — including the already completed Torvean hub and new proposals for Longman, Dalcross, and Inverness Campus — offers a sustainable, scalable solution. These hubs will connect workers with jobs, reduce congestion, support mode shift, and help deliver the social and economic aims of the Freeport and associated Regional Transformation Opportunities (RTOs). This includes developing hubs on a network basis and of varying scale with, for example, more local neighbourhood hubs with shared transport options connecting with larger strategic hubs that have bus / rail connections as well as shared mobility services all provided under a consistent brand and service provider model to facilitate seamless inter-hub usage. Provision for access by car at larger hubs is a consideration too, but in a proportionate manner and blended with shared and public transport access. The opportunity for non-commercial facilities is also a factor to further the attractiveness and commercial viability of a hub network. Mobility hubs have an important role in promoting sustainable travel in Highland and addressing the issue of forced car ownership whereby people feel they have no alternative but to own a car due to a lack of alternatives to meet their travel needs to access employment, education, healthcare, other services and for leisure/recreation purposes. Mobility hubs also present wider impacts with associated benefits such as: • Reducing carbon emissions and contributing to The Highland Council's climate targets. • Enhancing transport equity, by making travel more accessible to those without access to private vehicles. • Improving air quality and public health through modal shift to more sustainable modes. • Supporting local economic vitality by improving connections to employment, education and leisure opportunities. • Providing business and associated employment opportunities where the hubs include non-transport / commercial element. • Helping to focus user demand and optimise the operation of the public transport network by providing users to a focal point to access services. • Support commuting from housing areas to Freeport jobs • Alleviate congestion and environmental impacts from car-based travel • Enable access for residents without private vehicles • Coordinate development with new housing, employment, and public transport investments It will be important that the final designs carefully consider access for all users, including those with mobility impairments as well as neurodivergent members of the community, and that high-quality design principles are upheld throughout to ensure comfort and safety for all.
For construction projects, please confirm that your projects are construction ready. We are looking for confirmation that these are construction ready e.g. have no outstanding land ownership issues, all permissions are in place, design complete, monitoring and evaluation plan in place, cost estimates finalised, utilities surveys undertaken etc. (max 300 words)	N/A – project is not construction ready. Although some options may present deliverable pilot options for 25/26.
Please provide max 500 words on how the project provides high-quality bus infrastructure which contribute to the four priorities of the National Transport Strategy (NTS2) vision – to reduce inequality, take climate action, help deliver inclusive growth and improve health and well-being.	The project positively contributes to the four NTS priorities as follows: • **Reduce Inequality:** With there being greater reliance on public transport, active travel and shared mobility by those who do not own or have access to a private car, investment in mobility hubs can have a positive impact on enhancing access for all to employment, education, healthcare and other services. In doing so they can help negate the problem of forced car ownership in Highland where people feel they do not have an alternative to owning a car due to a lack of alternative travel options and constrained integration between different modes / services. Hubs can help connect underserved areas more effectively and in doing so help address 'transport poverty'. • **Take Climate Action:** In the short-term, greenhouse gas emissions would increase due to construction activities, including indirect emissions from the manufacture and transportation of materials as well as from emissions from fuel combusted by construction vehicles. The infrastructure would be designed to be resilient to predicted impacts arising from current and future weather events and climatic conditions, and designed in accordance with current planning, design, engineering practice, and codes. Mitigation and adaptation measures, including sustainable drainage, would be considered to address potential risks. The improved transport offer supported by mobility hubs would help to promote sustainable transport and behaviour change towards lower carbon transport modes with a positive impact on associated emissions. They also support shared transport, including by motorised means, but without the need for independent car ownership allowing vehicles to be shared by multiple people rather than the embodied carbon resulting from manufacturing being for a product to be owned by one user / household. • **Help Deliver Inclusive Growth:** As well as improving access to employment and education opportunities, the mobility hubs can themselves support commercial opportunity through offering opportunities for permanent and / or pop-up enterprises which could be targeted towards local independent sole traders / start-ups.

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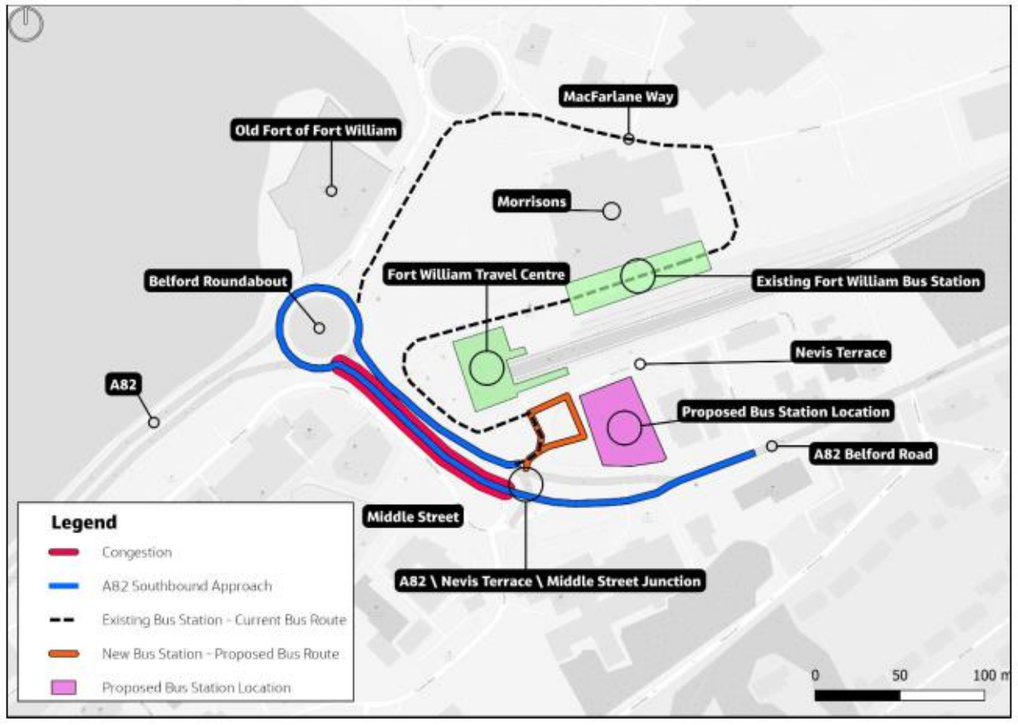
	• **Improve Health and Well-being:** Increasing the public transport and active travel offer with associated mode shift provides the potential for enhanced placemaking from the reduction in traffic. Furthermore, encouraging more active journeys brings physical and mental health benefits. A more attractive public transport network that encourages greater usage can in turn provide natural safety from more people using services / waiting facilities.
How does the project positively impact an area of higher deprivation (as identified by the Scottish Index of Multiple Deprivation (SIMD))? Are there any specific impacts on child poverty? (max 300 words)	For residents in lower ranked SIMD areas, access to affordable, reliable public transport is essential for daily life. By improving transport choices, the project helps address 'transport poverty' where people are excluded from opportunities due to poor or unaffordable transport options. The project is also expected to have a direct, positive impact on child poverty. In areas where families experience lower incomes and limited mobility, access to education, healthcare, and social opportunities can be constrained. Improving travel options to key destinations for families without private vehicles, the project will help reduce the disadvantage that transport barriers impose on young people. High-quality, inclusive infrastructure - such as step-free access, well-lit waiting facilities and safe pedestrian routes - supports families with pushchairs, children walking to school, and those with additional mobility needs. By improving these aspects as part of a mobility hub offer, the project contributes to safer, more equitable travel for all. By connecting people in deprived areas more effectively to jobs, training, and essential services, the project contributes to a longer-term strategy for lifting individuals and families out of poverty. The opportunity for improved public realm also contribute to community well-being and resilience, particularly in areas that have historically been underserved by transport investment.
Does this project contribute to any Strategic Transport Projects Review 2 recommendations? (max 300 words)	The project plays a significant role in supporting the recommendations of STPR2: • **Recommendation 1 Connected neighbourhoods:** The project supports this recommendation by improving access to local services via active and sustainable travel modes. Enhancements to pedestrian and cycling infrastructure alongside improved public transport help create a more liveable and accessible urban environment in line with 20-minute neighbourhood principles. • **Recommendation 6 Behavioural change initiatives:** The project supports this recommendation by increasing travel choices to complement efforts to deliver activities to encourage people to choose sustainable and active travel options. • **Recommendation 9 Improving access to bikes:** The opportunity to incorporate shared bike / e-bike hire into a mobility hub facility would support this recommendation to improve access to bikes to provide more people with the opportunity to cycle. • **Recommendation 21 Improved public transport passenger interchange facilities:** This recommendation seeks to improve public transport passenger facilities, including accessibility and quality enhancements. The STPR2 reporting notes that increasing the quality of passenger facilities would also improve the travel experience, especially benefiting those who do not have access to a car particularly those from the most deprived households. Mobility hubs provide the opportunity to transform the waiting facilities and experience for travelling passengers proportionate to the type of hub offer within a tiered network. • **Recommendation 22 Framework for delivery of mobility hubs:** This project directly aligns with aspirations at the national level to develop high-quality mobility hubs in Scotland. Furthermore, the specific work that forms part of this BIF application to develop a mobility hub network tailored in the Highland context could assist in delivering this recommendation to prepare a nationally-led framework for the delivery of mobility hubs that gives a template and pathway for action.
Fit with the partnership area's overall strategy for integrated transport, to encourage a modal shift from cars to more sustainable transport modes to reduce emissions.	This project is a key component of the Highland Bus Service Improvement Partnership's (BSIP) wider area strategy to deliver an integrated, low-carbon transport system that reduces car dependency and supports a shift toward more sustainable modes, including public transport, walking, wheeling and cycling. Developed in alignment with the Highland BSIP, HITRANS Regional Transport Strategy and Highland Local Transport Strategy, the project supports the shared ambition to create a well-connected, inclusive and environmentally responsible transport network. By increasing sustainable and active travel choices through mobility hubs developed in a manner tailored to the Highland context and a tiered way where the scale and component elements can flex to meet specific user / geographic circumstances, this project advocates an integrated transport offer and more seamless journeys to access services and facilities as well as locations of employment and education. Furthermore, providing a focus for user demand and bringing people to a point to access different services offers the potential to further optimise the bus network and potentially reduce factors such as dead running. In summary, the project is fully aligned with the Highland BSIP's goals for integrated and sustainable transport. It supports long-term modal shift, helps meet net zero targets and plays a vital role in creating a greener, healthier transport system within Fort William and beyond.
Please provide max 500 words on how the project is in line with the National Transport Strategy 2 sustainable travel and investment hierarchies, including to prioritise bus over other types of motorised traffic and ensuring integration with other modes.	This project is firmly aligned with the principles of the National Transport Strategy 2 (NTS2), including the Sustainable Travel Hierarchy and the Sustainable Investment Hierarchy which guide decision-making to prioritise sustainable, inclusive, and environmentally responsible transport modes. **Sustainable Travel Hierarchy** NTS2 places walking, wheeling and cycling at the top of the Sustainable Travel Hierarchy followed by public transport - particularly buses - as preferred alternatives to private car use. This project supports the hierarchy in practice by:

Project Name	Mobility Hub Network
	• Improving connectivity and bringing together public transport and shared transport in a network context. • Increasing the sustainable and active travel options to undertake journeys. • Creating the opportunity for safer, more inclusive spaces for those walking, wheeling and cycling. • Improving active travel integration with longer distance public transport trips. By delivering multi-modal mobility hubs in targeted locations to meet user needs and demand, the project directly supports the NTS2 vision for a transport system that reduces car dependency and encourages more sustainable, healthy travel behaviours. **Sustainable Investment Hierarchy** The Sustainable Investment Hierarchy prioritises maintaining and optimising existing infrastructure, then making better use of the network, before considering new infrastructure investment. The project reflects the investment hierarchy by delivering best value by investing in targeted improvements that unlock wider network benefits across the town's transport system. The project also aligns with the investment hierarchy's goal of supporting broader policy objectives, including decarbonisation, air quality improvement, and social inclusion. By improving access to transport, the project contributes meaningfully to these outcomes.
Please provide max 500 words on how the project improves bus journey times and provide greater reliability, by prioritising bus over other types of traffic thereby encouraging mode shift and improved bus services. (Not compulsory, however projects that contribute to this will be prioritised).	This project can help improve bus journey times and reliability through a combination of design, technology and planning strategies. For example, mobility hubs incorporating public transport would be designed with dedicated bus lanes for access / egress and the opportunity identified to introduce signal priority, if not already in place, at junctions in proximity to hubs. The internal layout provides the opportunity to reduce dwell times by co-locating local and longer distance bus services to enable quick and efficient transfers, supported by consideration of internal circulation to optimise the distance and time involved for buses to access a stance and leave this to return to the local / strategic road network. The project also provides the opportunity for network efficiency through focusing user demand on focal points instead of several small stops with associated stop-start time. Any changes would though be considered at a site specific level to ensure existing accessibility is not compromised by any rationalisation of existing stop locations. Mobility hubs can be flexibly located, such as strategically near town/city centres, residential areas or key employment/education hubs aligning with 20 minute neighbourhood principles and localised services and planning which in turn reduces the need for travel and increases the viability and attractiveness of active travel for journeys with positive impact on emissions and car veh-km. The reduced volume of traffic on the road network can positively impact other road users, including the reliability of bus services.
Please provide max 300 words to demonstrate the strength and commitment of and to joint working between Local Transport Authorities and operators to support bus services.	The Highland Council, HITRANS and bus operators have a track record of working together to deliver improvements to the transport network in the Highlands. This commitment is evidenced through the voluntary Highland Bus Service Improvement Partnership (BSIP) underpinned by the partnership's Service Improvement Plan which guides service and network improvements for bus throughout the Highland geography. The BSIP is built on shared objectives to improve the reliability, efficiency and attractiveness of bus services across Lochaber and the wider Highland region. On 5 May 2021 the Highland Council Infrastructure, Environment & Economy Committee agreed to the Council initiating a BSIP in Highland. The partnership comprises the following members: • Highlands & Islands Enterprise. • HITRANS. • Shiel Buses. • Stagecoach. • The Highland Council. The Highland BSIP is independently chaired by a respected figure who has held several senior management roles in the bus industry. Through the Highland BSIP, stakeholders have collectively identified priority corridors / areas for bus infrastructure investment, ensuring that measures are rooted in operational insight and passenger need to provide a targeted response to achieve success. Regular engagement through the BSIP governance structure has informed the project to date with operators providing data, operational feedback and input to maximise reliability and passenger benefit. This co-development process ensures that infrastructure investment is closely tied to service delivery improvements and operational feasibility. There is a strong, ongoing commitment from all partners to monitor outcomes and adapt services to maximise the benefits of the project. The project is also integrated into wider regional transport planning and supports ambitions for decarbonisation and modal shift. This close collaboration between public and private sector partners demonstrates a unified approach to strengthening public transport, delivering on national, regional as well as local transport objectives and ensuring long-term benefits for communities across Highland.
For construction projects over £0.5 million what operator 'match in kind' action and/or investment is proposed?	N/A – project is not at construction stage.

Project Name	Mobility Hub Network
For pre-construction projects, does this have elected member buy in? For construction projects, has the project been signed off by the relevant elected members/committee? If not required please state this, or if required, what are the timescales associated with such approvals. (max 300 words)	Yes as per previous BPF Connecting Inverness project and feedback received after a mobility hub paper was taken to committee in early 2025 to Inverness City Area Committee where overall support for the mobility hub concept was given., however project specifics will be subject to the normal committee process. N/A – project is not at construction stage however we aim to flush out any identifiable short term delivery pilot projects for 25/26.
Please provide confirmation that should funding be awarded in mid-May 2025 or earlier, that the project can be delivered by the end of March 2026.	Yes

Project Name	Fort William - Re-location/re-imagination of the bus station
Questions	**Response**
Voluntary Partnership Priority of Bus Infrastructure Tier 2 Funding Proposals submitted	6
Partnership project contact (Name, job description, organisation, e-mail address and contact details)*	Julie Cromarty Sustainable Transport Team Leader Julie.cromarty@highland.gov.uk 01463 702004
Project manager project contact (Name, job description, organisation, e-mail address and contact details)*	Neil Young Active Travel Manager The Highland Council Neil.Young@highland.gov.uk 01463 702004
I confirm that I have read the privacy policy and consent to the data I provide being used as set out in the policy.	Yes
Project location – co-ordinates	https://maps.app.goo.gl/UUCXA2snGeZMKsnX9
Project description	This project involves 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 and enhance access for passenger transfer. The relocated bus station in the wider context of the surrounding area and existing location is illustrated in the figure below.



Source: Lochaber Bus Partnership Fund Appraisal Report, April 2023

It is proposed that the new bus station would include digital public transport information boards, bike lockers, formalised seating areas, toilets, a ticket office (or ticketing machines) and other passenger facilities (potentially including a café or showers for example). The existing car park could be reconfigured as an attractive public space with direct routes helping to better connect the town centre and the bus station. In creating the routes, modern design standards would be employed to cater for the visually or mobility impaired, helping to improve the general accessibility of the bus station.

A new bus station combined with the reconfiguration of the existing car park, would provide the opportunity to employ placemaking principles. Reconfiguring the area as a formal civic space would make the surrounds more usable and visually attractive whilst helping to improve the visibility of the bus station within the town. A modern

Project Name	Fort William - Re-location/re-imagination of the bus station
	bus station, combined with the application of placemaking, would increase the overall profile of the bus station in the town and help improve the attractiveness of bus as a mode of transport. It is proposed that the relocated bus station is complemented by the introduction of bus priority provision at the A82 / Nevis Terrace / Middle Street Junction which forms a separate BIF application. This would involve the reconfiguration of the junction between the A82 / Nevis Terrace / Middle Street to remove the central reserve to allow buses to: • Turn right from Middle Street to the A82 northbound. • Turn right from the A82 southbound to Nevis Terrace (providing direct access to the bus station for southbound A82 traffic). • Travel straight across the A82 from Middle Street to Nevis Terrace. • Turn right / left from Nevis Terrace onto the A82 northbound / southbound (once the bus station is relocated).
Was this project identified through work undertaken through the Bus Partnership Fund? Please briefly outline details. (max 300 words)	The relocation of the bus station forms part of 'Package 3 - A82 / Nevis Terrace / Middle Street Junction Bus Priority and Bus Station Upgrades' which emerged from the Lochaber Bus Partnership appraisal study that reported in April 2023. The study involved an appraisal (following Scottish Transport Appraisal Guidance (STAG)) of bus-based options for the Lochaber area of Highland. Stakeholder and public feedback gathered through the appraisal highlighted that the existing bus station in Fort William is of low quality. It is currently formed of a series of lean-to shelters and bus cages located on MacFarlane Way adjacent to Morrisons supermarket. The current configuration limits the quality of the facilities for passengers as there is a constrained space for movement within the shelters, limited seating and a restraint on the amount of transport service information presented. Public feedback stated the bus station waiting area offers limited protection from cold weather. Given the station's location, it can also attract anti-social behaviour. Together these elements combine to limit the attractiveness of the bus station which can in turn influence the overall attractiveness of bus travel. With local services currently using Middle Street, the four lane A82 Belford Road creates severance for passengers wishing to transfer between local / longer distance services. This barrier combined with poor waiting facilities at the bus station can contribute to reducing the attractiveness of long-distance travel by bus to / from Fort William. The BPF appraisal therefore identified an opportunity to encourage a mode shift to public transport for longer distance trips to reduce the pressure on the road network, particularly during the summer period resulting in improved bus journey times and reliability through lower traffic volumes and reduced levels of congestion.
What stage(s) of project are you seeking funding for	Design.
What is the total amount of funding you need to progress this project in 2025-26?	£50,000
What is the total amount of funding you are looking for from the Bus Infrastructure Fund Tier 2?	The Lochaber transport appraisal estimated a cost of £8m to £10m for Package 3, including the relocation of the bus station and A82 / Nevis Terrace / Middle Street Junction improvement to introduce priority for buses. An estimated cost for the bus station will be defined as part of the feasibility design work to be progressed in 2025-26. This will take account of construction costs as well as ongoing maintenance and operational costs.
Is this a multi-year project? Please provide cost details about the project if design or construction will span multiple financial years. If a project is multi-year, please make it clear what is proposed for 2025-26 and what is proposed for subsequent years.	This is a multi-year project with an indicative delivery timeframe as follows: • 2025-26: Feasibility study and concept design, including stakeholder and community engagement. • 2026-27: Outline Business Case. Detailed Design. • 2027-28: Tender package. Full Business Case. • 2028-30: Construction and site supervision. Future steps and timing will need to align with wider projects and policy, including the FW2040 Masterplan, Fort William Integrated Transport Plan and Highland Wide Local Development Plan. Furthermore, the construction timeframe may be contingent on the timing of the Fort William hospital relocation. The potential to retain some temporary spaces during the construction and potentially the initial operation of the bus station to maintain the continuity of parking provision for essential hospital visits could be considered so as not to stall progress.
Please briefly (max 500 words) describe the proposed project. If a project is multi-year, please make it clear what is proposed for 2025-26 and what is proposed for subsequent years.	The problems, opportunities, issues and constraints experienced by the bus network in Lochaber and supporting infrastructure as well as for those who use the services / infrastructure is well understood through the Lochaber BPF appraisal. The next stage for this project is centred on building on this existing knowledge. A staged approach will be undertaken as part of a feasibility study and design work to be progressed in 2025-26: **Stage 1 Existing Baseline:** A proportionate baselining exercise will be undertaken to ensure the project is underpinned by a cohesive evidence base of the existing situation and future circumstances. This will be informed by stakeholder engagement, collation of available secondary datasets and on-site observations focused on: • Existing bus user demand and future demand projections. • Current levels of walking and cycling at the bus station / main routes of access.

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	• Existing demand, usage patterns and revenue for Ness Street car park. • Junction / road network operation at / within the vicinity of the existing and relocated bus station sites. **Stage 2 Need and Demand Assessment:** This will entail a focus on the different type and scale of provision to be incorporated into the new facility. Matters for consideration, include but are not limited to the: • Size and shape of facility for operational needs and passenger facilities, informed by current and projected requirements. • Understanding of requirements for local bus, inter-urban, express services – number and type of stances. • Provision for wider use such as rail replacement services and tour buses. • Waiting facilities – seating, storage, ticketing, welfare facilities. **Stage 3 Design Development:** The outputs of stages 1 and 2 will help influence and drive the direction of the design in terms of mix of component elements and specifics of scale / placement / location within the footprint of the new site location. This will be accompanied by wider considerations, including opportunities for improving place-making and foot access to the rail station as well as connectivity with the town centre and wider active travel links. The progress of this project will be intrinsically linked to the other project focused on the improvement of the A82 / Nevis Terrace / Middle Street Junction to ensure the bus station layout and junction layout align to optimise access and egress arrangements for bus services as well as for non-motorised users crossing to / from the bus station area. Costings will be developed, including appropriate provision for risk and optimism bias at this stage. **Stage 4 Impact Assessment:** A high-level assessment will be undertaken of the preferred layout emerging from Stage 3. This will include consideration of construction, operational and maintenance costs as well as user and operational benefits. Proportionate quantification will be undertaken to assist in demonstrating value for money. Stakeholder and community engagement will continue to be a backbone with input sought to help shape as well as gather feedback on design concepts at relevant points. Ongoing interaction of the Highland BSIP with others, including the FW2040 project team as well as Transport Scotland will be key.
Please briefly (max 300 words) describe the key scheme objectives.	The key aims and outcomes of the Lochaber BPF appraisal were to: • Afford significant priority to buses over other forms of motorised transport. • Improve the punctuality and reliability of bus services. • Aid in increasing bus patronage. The Transport Planning Objectives are as follows: • To reduce average southbound bus journey times within the six-hour peak period (12pm to 6pm), May to September, between the A830 at Corpach and Belford Roundabout to within 2 minutes (20%) of the 2019 annual average journey time by 2026. • Improve integration between local and long bus services, with 80% of local services stopping points being within 100m of longer distance stopping points by 2026, compared to a 2019 service baseline. • Reduce traffic volumes within the six-hour peak period (12pm to 6pm) between May and September by 480 vehicles (10%) by 2030 when compared with the 2019 August baseline traffic volumes, on the A82 southbound between the A830 and Nevis Junction by encouraging mode shift to sustainable modes. Package 3, including the relocated bus station and bus priority at the A82 / Nevis Terrace / Middle Street Junction, was scored to have a major positive impact on the service integration objective. This reflects that a new bus station would provide a more convenient and accessible location for both local and long distance services, and in doing so encourage more local services to use the bus station to help reduce barriers and improve integration between services. Given that all bus services operating in Fort William currently make use of the A82 in the vicinity of the proposed location, combined with the introduction of bus priority measures to access the new bus station, there is significant potential for an increase in the number of local services stopping within 100m of longer distance service stopping points. Impact on the two other objectives was scored minor positive.

Please set out the project management and other staffing or consultancy costs that you anticipate you will need to deliver this project.	The Highland Council is seeking funding towards resource to manage and oversee the delivery of the project, as well as consultancy support. This is as follows:
	
	2025-26
	• THC dedicated project management:
	  ○ BIF Tier 2 Programme Proposals by THC would require 10% project management costs. So if we are awarded all 8 proposals we would require £216,800
	• Consultancy Support:
	  Feasibility study and concept design work - £50,000.

What costs associated with the above are you seeking from the Bus Infrastructure Fund Tier 2.	Funding is sought for all costs to be covered.
How will the project and its development demonstrate value for money/best value? Is the project supported by a business case (where applicable)?	A full economic assessment to calculate the Transport Economic Efficiency (TEE) was not undertaken as part of the Lochaber BPF appraisal due to the uncertainty over the junction layout forming part of the package the bus station sat within. A high-level economic assessment of Package 3 was however undertaken and anticipated there would be delay to general traffic, leading to disbenefits in the order of £3m over a 60-year period. There are anticipated to be benefits to bus users with journey time savings of approximately 30 seconds in the off-peak and up to 2 minutes

Project Name	Fort William - Re-location/re-imagination of the bus station
(max 300 words)	in the peak, which would result in an estimated benefit to bus passengers over a 60-year appraisal of between £1m and £2m. These impacts are largely influenced by the introduction of bus priority at the A82 / Nevis Terrace / Middle Street. Investing in the bus station facilities will have wider impacts with associated benefits: • Reducing carbon emissions and contributing to The Highland Council's climate targets. • Enhancing transport equity, by enhancing the journey experience for those without access to private vehicles. • Improving air quality and public health through modal shift to more sustainable modes. • Supporting local economic vitality by improving the journey experience to access employment, education and leisure opportunities. It will be important that the final design carefully considers access for all users, including those with mobility impairments as well as neurodivergent members of the community, and that high-quality design principles are upheld throughout to ensure comfort and safety. A more detailed economic assessment will be undertaken as part of the next stage of work that will involve further design development. This will include consideration of construction costs as well as operating and maintenance costs together with account taken of user and operational benefits arising from the change in location.
For construction projects, please confirm that your projects are construction ready. We are looking for confirmation that these are construction ready e.g. have no outstanding land ownership issues, all permissions are in place, design complete, monitoring and evaluation plan in place, cost estimates finalised, utilities surveys undertaken etc. (max 300 words)	N/A – project is not construction ready.
Please provide max 500 words on how the project provides high-quality bus infrastructure which contribute to the four priorities of the National Transport Strategy (NTS2) vision – to reduce inequality, take climate action, help deliver inclusive growth and improve health and well-being.	The project positively contributes to the four NTS priorities as follows: • **Reduce Inequality:** With there being greater reliance on public transport by those who do not own or have access to a private car, investment in bus infrastructure can have a positive impact on enhancing access for all to employment, education, healthcare and other services. It also help negate the problem of forced car ownership in Highland where people feel they do not have an alternative but to own a car due to the lack of and unreliability of bus services. A relocated bus station would help transform the public transport offer in Lochaber, underpinning operations by a modern and fit for purpose facility that supports wider aspirations of improving connectivity and accessibility for all. • **Take Climate Action:** In the short-term, greenhouse gas emissions would increase due to construction activities undertaken to deliver the new bus station, including indirect emissions from the manufacture and transportation of materials as well as from emissions from fuel combusted by construction plant and vehicles. The infrastructure would be designed to be resilient to predicted impacts arising from current and future weather events and climatic conditions, and designed in accordance with current planning, design, engineering practice, and codes. A number of mitigation and adaptation measures, including sustainable drainage, would be considered to address potential risks. The shorter distance buses would be required to travel to access the relocated bus station and associated reduction in vehicle kilometres can be expected to positively impact on emissions. • **Help Deliver Inclusive Growth:** Fort William 2040 aims to create a thriving and sustainable town for all. 'A Connected Place' is a central theme with there being a need to maximise opportunities for a diverse range of transport and other connecting networks. A new bus station would help underpin this vision, supporting access to employment and education opportunities as well as sustainable tourism across the Lochaber area. • **Improve Health and Well-being:** An enhanced passenger waiting facility with built-in safety considerations to the design offers benefit in terms of real and perceived security, particularly for more vulnerable people travelling alone. A more attractive waiting facility that encourages more usage of the bus services can in turn provide natural passive safety from more people using / being in the area. Furthermore, encouraging a mode shift to public transport inherently results in more active journeys as users are required to walk to bus stops/stations, with associated positive health impacts.
How does the project positively impact an area of higher deprivation (as identified by the Scottish Index of Multiple Deprivation (SIMD))? Are there any specific impacts on child poverty? (max 300 words)	SIMD 2020 data shows that overall, 11% of data zones in the Lochaber BPF area are ranked within the bottom quintile i.e. the 20% most deprived zones across Scotland. Alongside this, 5% of data zones are ranked within the top quintile i.e. the 20% least deprived zones across Scotland suggesting a mix of deprivation. In general, the more densely populated urban areas within Lochaber show higher levels of deprivation. The figure below indicates the overall SIMD decile ranking of data zones within the Lochaber BPF area.

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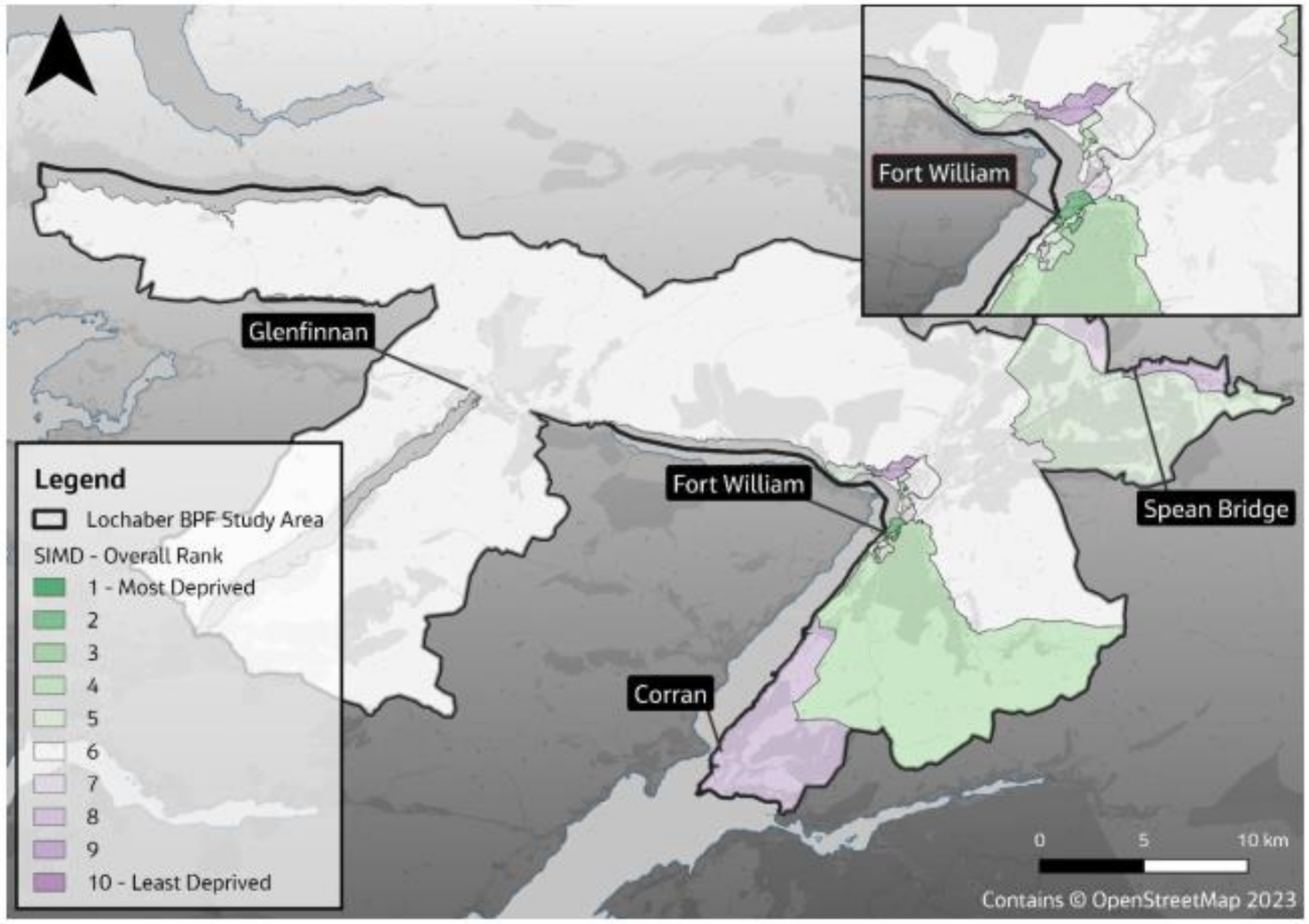
	 *Source: Lochaber Bus Partnership Fund Initial Appraisal: Case for Change, April 2023* In summary, the settlements in Lochaber all display some degree of variation in terms of deprivation, with more urban areas such as Fort William showing higher rates of deprivation in comparison to more sparsely populated areas. For households in lower ranked SIMD areas, access to reliable public transport is essential for daily life. By transforming the bus station facility in Fort William, the project enhances the public transport offer available to lower income households. This helps positively contribute to addressing 'transport poverty' where people are excluded from opportunities due to poor or unaffordable transport options. The project is also expected to have a direct, positive impact on child poverty. In areas where families experience lower incomes and limited mobility, access to education, healthcare and social opportunities can be constrained. The public transport infrastructure will enhance the journey experience to access key destinations such as Lochaber High School and healthcare services. By improving the quality of public transport for families without private vehicles, the project helps reduce the disadvantage that transport barriers impose on young people.
Does this project contribute to any Strategic Transport Projects Review 2 recommendations? (max 300 words)	The project contributes to the following STPR2 recommendations: • **Recommendation 21 Improved public transport passenger interchange facilities:** This STPR2 recommendation seeks to improve public transport passenger facilities, including accessibility and quality enhancements. The STPR2 reporting notes that increasing the quality of passenger facilities would also improve the travel experience, especially benefiting those who do not have access to a car particularly those from the most deprived households. The opportunity to reduce barriers to public transport use, especially for those with reduced mobility or impaired vision or hearing and for those who are neurodiverse is highlighted. Relocation

Project Name	Fort William - Re-location/re-imagination of the bus station
	of the bus station in Fort William provides the opportunity to enhance the waiting environment through improved provision and facilities combined with the opportunity for placemaking enhancements. • **Recommendation 23 Smart, integrated public transport ticketing:** This STPR2 recommendation seeks to simplify how people store and pay for tickets with different public transport operators. Relocation of the bus station in Fort William provides the opportunity to enhance ticket purchase facilities, supporting the wider ambition of this recommendation. • **Recommendation 32 Trunk Road and Motorway network renewal for reliability, resilience and safety** – As part of this recommendation, STPR2 recommends an Integrated transport plan for Fort William to increase resilience and reliability on the trunk road to improve sustainable transport and enhance the sense of place in the local community. It is noted within the STPR2 reporting that this could potentially include online and offline improvements on the A82, including a new link road, with the removal of traffic from the already constrained corridor and release of capacity on the existing A82 to become a sustainable travel corridor. The relocation of the bus station would serve to complement and further reinforce the aspirations of this recommendation to enhance sustainable transport provision in Fort William.
Fit with the partnership area's overall strategy for integrated transport, to encourage a modal shift from cars to more sustainable transport modes to reduce emissions.	This project is a key component of the Highland Bus Service Improvement Partnership's (BSIP) wider area strategy to deliver an integrated, low-carbon transport system that reduces car dependency and supports a shift toward more sustainable modes, including public transport, walking, wheeling and cycling. Developed in alignment with the Highland BSIP, HITRANS Regional Transport Strategy and Highland Local Transport Strategy, the project supports the shared ambition to create a well-connected, inclusive and environmentally responsible transport network. By providing an accessible and high quality bus station that also brings operational efficiencies, the project addresses a major barrier to modal shift - the attractiveness of bus services in terms of the quality of infrastructure as well as the competitiveness of services with other modes. In summary, the project is fully aligned with the Highland BSIP's goals for integrated and sustainable transport. It supports long-term modal shift, helps meet net zero targets and plays a vital role in creating a greener, healthier transport system within Fort William and beyond.
Please provide max 500 words on how the project is in line with the National Transport Strategy 2 sustainable travel and investment hierarchies, including to prioritise bus over other types of motorised traffic and ensuring integration with other modes.	This project is firmly aligned with the principles of the National Transport Strategy 2 (NTS2), including the Sustainable Travel Hierarchy and the Sustainable Investment Hierarchy which guide decision-making to prioritise sustainable, inclusive, and environmentally responsible transport modes. **Sustainable Travel Hierarchy** NTS2 places walking, wheeling and cycling at the top of the Sustainable Travel Hierarchy followed by public transport - particularly buses - as preferred alternatives to private car use. This project supports the hierarchy in practice by: • Enhancing bus infrastructure to improve waiting facilities, making public transport a more attractive choice for residents, workers and visitors. • Integrating the bus station further into the fabric of the wider transport network, including the local bus service offer, and town centre itself to increase the profile and prominence of bus travel within and to / from Fort William. • Creating the opportunity for safer, more inclusive spaces underpinned by place-making that puts non-motorised users first. By delivering a new bus station that is modern and fit for purpose, the project directly supports the NTS2 vision for a transport system that reduces car dependency and encourages more sustainable, healthy travel behaviours. **Sustainable Investment Hierarchy** The Sustainable Investment Hierarchy prioritises maintaining and optimising existing infrastructure, then making better use of the network, before considering new infrastructure investment. The project reflects the investment hierarchy by: • Targeting investment on infrastructure with a focus to encourage sustainable travel and support travel behaviour choices away from private car trips. • Optimising available land by repurposing car parking space to the betterment of the sustainable transport offer. • Delivering best value by proportionate investment in new infrastructure that is centred on sustainable travel and which will help unlock wider network benefits across the town's transport system as well as support broader development proposals for Fort William and Loachaber more broadly. The project also aligns with the investment hierarchy's goal of supporting broader policy objectives, including decarbonisation, air quality improvement, and social inclusion. By enhancing the passenger experience and enabling greater uptake of public transport alongside optimising bus operations, the project contributes to these outcomes.
Please provide max 500 words on how the project improves bus journey times and provide greater reliability, by prioritising bus over other types of traffic thereby encouraging mode shift and improved bus services. (Not compulsory, however projects that contribute to this will be prioritised).	The relocated bus station would enhance the operational efficiency of all services that use the bus station as it would provide more direct access to and from the trunk road. Specifically, a bus station located on the site of the current Nevis Terrace car park adjacent to the A82 would avoid the need for buses to travel via MacFarlane Way to the existing bus station location. These operational benefits are anticipated to enhance the attractiveness of services and encourage a mode shift from private car, reducing traffic volumes on the A82 and positively contributing to the Scottish Government commitment to achieve a 20% reduction in car-veh kilometres by 2030. Improving the integration of local and longer distance bus services through relocation of the bus station would improve the attractiveness of public transport, particularly for multi-modal and inter-modal trips where integration is critical.

Project Name	Fort William - Re-location/re-imagination of the bus station
Please provide max 300 words to demonstrate the strength and commitment of and to joint working between Local Transport Authorities and operators to support bus services.	The Highland Council, HITRANS and bus operators have a track record of working together to deliver improvements to the transport network in the Highlands. This commitment is evidenced through the voluntary Highland Bus Service Improvement Partnership (BSIP) underpinned by the partnership's Service Improvement Plan which guides service and network improvements for bus throughout the Highland geography. The BSIP is built on shared objectives to improve the reliability, efficiency and attractiveness of bus services across Lochaber and the wider Highland region. On 5 May 2021 the Highland Council Infrastructure, Environment & Economy Committee agreed to the Council initiating a BSIP in Highland. The partnership comprises the following members: • Highlands & Islands Enterprise. • HITRANS. • Shiel Buses. • Stagecoach. • The Highland Council. The Highland BSIP is independently chaired by a respected figure who has held several senior management roles in the bus industry. Through the Highland BSIP, stakeholders have collectively identified priority corridors / areas for bus infrastructure investment, ensuring that measures are rooted in operational insight and passenger need to provide a targeted response to achieve success. Regular engagement through the BSIP governance structure has informed the project to date with operators providing data, operational feedback and input to maximise reliability and passenger benefit. This co-development process ensures that infrastructure investment is closely tied to service delivery improvements and operational feasibility. There is a strong, ongoing commitment from all partners to monitor outcomes and adapt services to maximise the benefits of the project. The project is also integrated into wider regional transport planning and supports ambitions for decarbonisation and modal shift. This close collaboration between public and private sector partners demonstrates a unified approach to strengthening public transport, delivering on national, regional as well as local transport objectives and ensuring long-term benefits for communities across Highland.
For construction projects over £0.5 million what operator 'match in kind' action and/or investment is proposed?	N/A – project is not at construction stage.
For pre-construction projects, does this have elected member buy in? For construction projects, has the project been signed off by the relevant elected members/committee? If not required please state this, or if required, what are the timescales associated with such approvals. (max 300 words)	Yes through the previous committee agreements under BPF however project specifics will be subject to the normal committee process as the project progresses. This is also linked with the ITP which forms part of STPR2. N/A – project is not at construction stage.
Please provide confirmation that should funding be awarded in mid-May 2025 or earlier, that the project can be delivered by the end of March 2026.	Yes

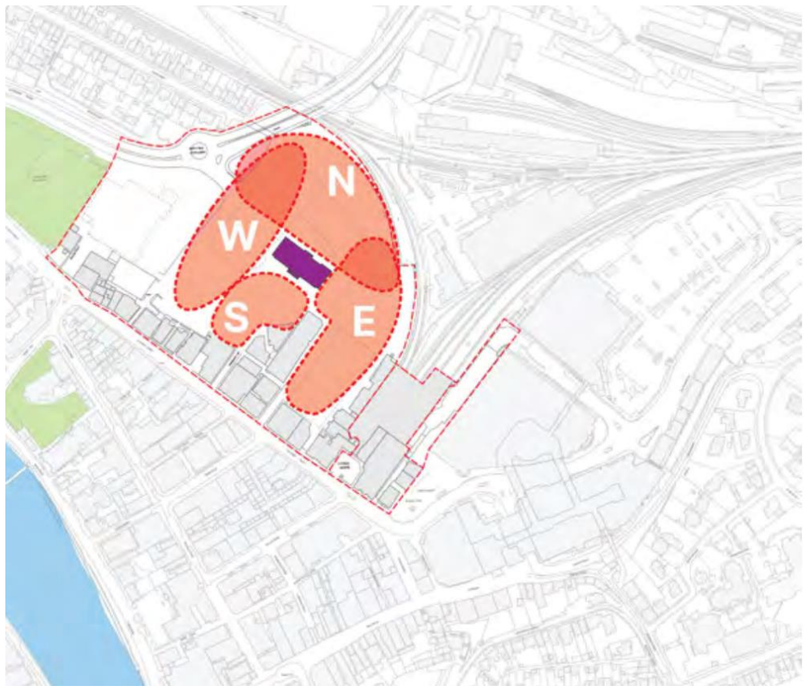
Project Name	Inverness Bus Priority and Enforcement Measures
Questions	**Response**
Voluntary Partnership Priority of Bus Infrastructure Tier 2 Funding Proposals submitted	7
Partnership project contact (Name, job description, organisation, e-mail address and contact details)*	Julie Cromarty Sustainable Transport Team Leader Julie.cromarty@highland.gov.uk 01463 702004
Project manager project contact (Name, job description, organisation, e-mail address and contact details)*	Neil Young Active Travel Manager The Highland Council Neil.young@highland.gov.uk 01463 702004
I confirm that I have read the privacy policy and consent to the data I provide being used as set out in the policy.	Yes
Project location – co-ordinates	Castle Street - https://maps.app.goo.gl/QrLHieDu6h9onswB8 Millburn King Duncans Road - https://maps.app.goo.gl/GvkChnN4mcz2vwpY8 Millburn Under pass at Eastgate - https://maps.app.goo.gl/DRZNLB4cR7NjoC9a8 Maples Ness-side - https://maps.app.goo.gl/LuLVgTzEJmQGp8bf6 UHI onto B9006 - https://maps.app.goo.gl/iLAhvasVmsmLReWr9 Bank Street on to Church Street - https://maps.app.goo.gl/HUbMMjv3qzp7THCb7
Project description	Senior management of the Highland Council has considered the introduction of a new shuttle service between Torvean mobility hub and Inverness Castle (opening to visitor's late summer 2025) and this needs further discussion with all bus operators as to how this can be realised. The proposed route for the shuttle bus will pick-up and drop-off passengers at the bus stop on the castle side of Castle Street, which currently has no bus shelter or real-time passenger information (RTPI). There is a shelter on the opposite side of the road and new bus waiting and information infrastructure is required on Castle Street to link in with this shuttle service. This project proposes to replace and relocate the existing bus shelter in order to maximise pavement space and install a new bus shelter and RTPI on the castle side of Castle Street. In addition, there are five existing bus priority lanes in Inverness that are clearly identified through signing and lining but are currently unenforceable are progressing with Traffic Orders to enable enforcement which is proposed to be by way of the installation of bus lane enforcement cameras. This project therefore will purchase and install the cameras at the locations as per the above.
Was this project identified through work undertaken through the Bus Partnership Fund? Please briefly outline details. (max 300 words)	The Torvean mobility hub was identified as part of the Connecting Inverness transport appraisal, which was funded via the BPF. The bus priority measures on Castle Street were also identified as part of that work. The Highland Council and further BPF funding supported the creation of the Torvean mobility hub.
What stage(s) of project are you seeking funding for	During the financial year 2025-26, funding is sought for the following: • Castle Street Bus Infrastructure: Install 2 x new bus shelters, RTPI, Flag & Pole, etc • Millburn King Duncans Road – Purchase and install enforcement camera • Millburn Under pass at Eastgate – Purchase and install enforcement camera • Maples Ness-side – Purchase and install enforcement camera • UHI onto B9006 – Purchase and install enforcement camera • Bank Street on to Church Street – Purchase and install enforcement camera
What is the total amount of funding you need to progress this project in 2025-26?	£300,000
What is the total amount of funding you are looking for from the Bus Infrastructure Fund Tier 2?	£300,000

Project Name	Inverness Bus Priority and Enforcement Measures
Questions	**Response**
Is this a multi-year project? Please provide cost details about the project if design or construction will span multiple financial years. If a project is multi-year, please make it clear what is proposed for 2025-26 and what is proposed for subsequent years.	The project would be complete within financial year 2025-26.
Please briefly (max 500 words) describe the proposed project. If a project is multi-year, please make it clear what is proposed for 2025-26 and what is proposed for subsequent years.	Senior management of the Highland Council has considered the introduction of a new shuttle service between Torvean mobility hub and Inverness Castle (opening to visitor's late summer 2025) and this needs further discussion with all bus operators as to how this can be realised. The proposed route for the shuttle bus will pick-up and drop-off passengers at the bus stop on the castle side of Castle Street, which currently has no bus shelter or real-time passenger information (RTPI). There is a shelter on the opposite side of the road and new bus waiting and information infrastructure is required on Castle Street to link in with this shuttle service. This project proposes to replace and relocate the existing bus shelter in order to maximise pavement space and install a new bus shelter and RTPI on the castle side of Castle Street. In addition, there are five existing bus priority lanes in Inverness that are clearly identified through signing and lining but are currently unenforceable. THC are progressing with Traffic Orders to enable enforcement which is proposed to be by way of the installation of bus lane enforcement cameras. This project therefore will purchase and install the cameras at the locations as per the above. This project will be completed within financial year 2025-26.
Please briefly (max 300 words) describe the key scheme objectives.	The key objectives of the project are as follows: • Improve bus journey time, and reliability between Torvean Mobility Hub and the City Centre. • Improve the integration, access and waiting environment to enhance bus user experience. • Contribute to the uptake of bus patronage associated with tourism. • Deliver enforcement infrastructure to ensure safe, effective use of existing bus priority infrastructure.
Please set out the project management and other staffing or consultancy costs that you anticipate you will need to deliver this project.	The Highland Council is seeking funding towards resource to manage and oversee the delivery of the project, as well as consultancy support. This is as follows: 2025-26 • THC dedicated project management: ○ BIF Tier 2 Programme Proposals by THC would require 10% project management costs. So if we are awarded all 8 proposals we would require £216,800 • Planning, Detailed design, Procurement, Construction Cost £300,000
What costs associated with the above are you seeking from the Bus Infrastructure Fund Tier 2.	The Highland Council is seeking for all costs to be covered.
How will the project and its development demonstrate value for money/best value? Is the project supported by a business case (where applicable)? (max 300 words)	The bus passenger experience improvements proposed for Castle Street in Inverness, along with bus lane camera enforcement at other locations, aims to demonstrate value for money and best value through several key benefits: • Improved bus reliability and punctuality: By enforcing bus lanes, the project aims to reduce delays and improve the reliability and punctuality of bus services. This can lead to increased public transport usage, reducing congestion and emissions. • Enhanced traffic flow: Prioritising buses can help streamline traffic flow, making the bus lanes more efficient. This can benefit not only bus users but also other road users by reducing bottlenecks and improving travel times. • Cost savings: Over time, improved bus services will lead to cost savings. It is envisaged that efficient bus services will reduce the need for additional infrastructure investments and lower operational costs. • Environmental benefits: Providing improved passenger infrastructure will encourage more people to use public transport which will lead to a reduction in the number of private vehicles on the road, thereby decreasing greenhouse gas emissions and contributing to environmental sustainability.
For construction projects, please confirm that your projects are construction ready. We are looking for confirmation that these are construction ready e.g. have no outstanding land ownership issues, all permissions are in place, design complete, monitoring and evaluation	These measures are considered as quick wins. This project would see positive change implemented within a matter of months. All statutory requirements will be met and The Highland Council has the authority to deliver the measures.

Project Name	Inverness Bus Priority and Enforcement Measures
Questions	**Response**
plan in place, cost estimates finalised, utilities surveys undertaken etc. (max 300 words)	
Please provide max 500 words on how the project provides high-quality bus infrastructure which contribute to the four priorities of the National Transport Strategy (NTS2) vision – to reduce inequality, take climate action, help deliver inclusive growth and improve health and well-being.	The project strongly aligns with the four priorities of the National Transport Strategy (NTS2) vision: • **Reduces Inequalities:** The enhanced bus infrastructure will improve access to affordable and reliable public transport, benefiting those who rely on buses for essential journeys, including lower-income households, young people, older adults, and those without access to a private vehicle. By improving journey times and reliability, the project makes public transport a more viable option for all users, helping to bridge gaps in transport access and reduce social exclusion. • **Takes Climate Action:** Prioritising buses over private car traffic on the corridor directly supports a modal shift toward more sustainable transport. Improved bus journey times and reduced delays at pinch points will encourage greater use of public transport, helping to reduce greenhouse gas emissions and air pollution. The integration of active travel infrastructure further complements this by promoting walking, wheeling, and cycling as alternatives to short car journeys. • **Helps Deliver Inclusive Economic Growth:** A more efficient and connected bus network strengthens Inverness's ability to support inclusive growth. The bus routes that would benefit from this project link residential areas to key employment, education, and retail destinations, including the city centre, Inverness Campus, and the retail park. Enhancing bus infrastructure ensures that people across all demographics can access opportunities more easily, improving labour market participation and supporting local businesses through better connectivity. • **Improves Health and Well-being:** High-quality, accessible public transport reduces reliance on cars and supports more active lifestyles by encouraging multi-modal travel. Reduced traffic congestion and improved air quality contribute directly to better public health outcomes. Furthermore, by making sustainable transport modes more attractive and safer, the project supports healthier travel habits and reduces stress associated with unreliable or lengthy commutes. In summary, by delivering high-quality bus infrastructure, the project supports a more accessible, sustainable, inclusive, and healthier transport network.
How does the project positively impact an area of higher deprivation (as identified by the Scottish Index of Multiple Deprivation (SIMD))? Are there any specific impacts on child poverty? (max 300 words)	The project delivers targeted benefits to areas identified as experiencing higher levels of deprivation, including neighbourhoods within Inverness that fall within the most deprived 20% of data zones according to the Scottish Index of Multiple Deprivation (SIMD), such as parts of Raigmore, Longman, and the eastern city centre which face challenges related to access to affordable transport, employment, education, and services. Positive impacts of the project on areas of higher deprivation include: • **Improving Access and Affordability:** For residents in SIMD-identified areas, access to affordable, reliable public transport is essential for daily life. By prioritising buses and improving service efficiency, the project reduces journey times and improves reliability—making public transport more attractive, cost-effective, and accessible for low-income households. This helps address "transport poverty," where people are excluded from opportunities due to poor or unaffordable transport options. • **Supporting Children and Families:** The project is also expected to have a direct, positive impact on child poverty. In areas where families experience lower incomes and limited mobility, access to education, healthcare, and social opportunities can be constrained. The improved public transport infrastructure will enhance connectivity to key destinations such as schools (e.g., Millburn Academy), Inverness Campus, and child healthcare services. By improving access for families without private vehicles, the project helps reduce the disadvantage that transport barriers impose on children's life chances. • **Enabling Inclusive Mobility:** High-quality, inclusive infrastructure—such as step-free access, well-lit bus stops, and safe pedestrian routes—supports families with pushchairs, children walking to school, and those with additional mobility needs. By improving these aspects along a busy urban corridor, the project contributes to safer, more equitable travel for all. • **Wider Social and Economic Benefits:** By connecting people in deprived areas more effectively to jobs, training, and essential services, the project contributes to a longer-term strategy for lifting individuals and families out of poverty. Improved public realm and safer streets also contribute to community well-being and resilience, particularly in areas that have historically been underserved by transport investment..
Does this project contribute to any Strategic Transport Projects Review 2 recommendations? (max 300 words)	The project supports and contributes to multiple STPR2 recommendations, particularly in the areas of sustainable transport, modal shift, and equitable access. Alignment is demonstrated in the following ways: • **Enhancing Public Transport**: The bus priority measures, including enabling the monitoring of dedicated bus lanes will significantly improve the reliability and efficiency of bus services. This aligns with STPR2's recommendation to enhance public transport, making it a more attractive option for commuters and reducing reliance on private cars. • **Decarbonisation Efforts**: By prioritising sustainable transport options, the project contributes to Scotland's decarbonisation targets. Reducing car usage and promoting public and active transport will help lower greenhouse gas emissions, in line with STPR2's recommendations. • **Improving Connectivity**: Enhancing the transport infrastructure on will improve connectivity between key areas in Inverness.

Project Name	Inverness Bus Priority and Enforcement Measures
Questions	**Response**
	• **Inclusive Growth**: The project is designed to benefit all members of the community, ensuring that transport improvements contribute to social inclusion and wellbeing. By providing better access to public and active transport options, the project addresses inequalities and supports STPR2's inclusive growth objectives.
Fit with the partnership area's overall strategy for integrated transport, to encourage a modal shift from cars to more sustainable transport modes to reduce emissions.	The project is a key component of the Highland partnership area's wider strategy to deliver an integrated, low-carbon transport system that reduces car dependency and supports a shift toward more sustainable modes, including public transport, walking, wheeling, and cycling. Developed in alignment with the Highland Bus Service Improvement Partnership (BSIP) and the HITRANS Regional Transport Strategy and Highlands Local Transport Strategy, the project supports the shared ambition to create a well-connected, inclusive, and environmentally responsible transport network. By prioritising bus services through journey time improvements and infrastructure enhancements, the project addresses a major barrier to modal shift—bus service reliability—while also integrating high-quality active travel routes along a key urban corridor.
Please provide max 500 words on how the project is in line with the National Transport Strategy 2 sustainable travel and investment hierarchies, including to prioritise bus over other types of motorised traffic and ensuring integration with other modes.	The project is firmly aligned with the principles of the National Transport Strategy 2 (NTS2), particularly the Sustainable Travel Hierarchy and the Sustainable Investment Hierarchy, which guide decision-making to prioritise sustainable, inclusive, and environmentally responsible transport modes. **Sustainable Travel Hierarchy** NTS2 places walking, wheeling, and cycling at the top of the Sustainable Travel Hierarchy, followed by public transport—particularly buses—as preferred alternatives to private car use. The project supports this hierarchy in practice by: • Enhancing bus infrastructure to improve journey times and reliability, making public transport a more attractive choice for residents, workers, and visitors. • Prioritising buses over general traffic through bus lanes and junction improvements, reinforcing bus travel as the more efficient mode. • Improving pedestrian and cycling infrastructure to support active travel for short journeys and integration with longer public transport trips. • Creating safer, more inclusive spaces for those walking and wheeling, particularly at key junctions and crossing points. By delivering a corridor where active travel and bus users are clearly prioritised over general motorised traffic, the project directly supports the NTS2 vision for a transport system that reduces car dependency and encourages more sustainable, healthy travel behaviours. **Sustainable Investment Hierarchy** The Sustainable Investment Hierarchy prioritises maintaining and optimising existing infrastructure, then making better use of the network, before considering new infrastructure investment. The project reflects this by: • Upgrading existing infrastructure rather than building new roads. • Optimising road space use by reallocating it in favour of sustainable modes, including buses and active travel. • Integrating improvements into the existing transport network to enhance efficiency and accessibility, without large-scale new infrastructure. • Delivering best value by investing in targeted improvements that unlock wider network benefits across the city's transport system. The project also aligns with the investment hierarchy's goal of supporting broader policy objectives, including decarbonisation, air quality improvement, and social inclusion.
Please provide max 500 words on how the project improves bus journey times and provide greater reliability, by prioritising bus over other types of traffic thereby encouraging mode shift and improved bus services. (Not compulsory, however projects that contribute to this will be prioritised).	The project would deliver improvements to bus journey times and service reliability by introducing targeted bus priority measures on Castle Street. These improvements will make public transport a faster, more dependable, and attractive option for both existing and new users, helping to shift travel behaviour away from private car use. The project introduces several bus priority interventions, including: • Ensuring the safe and effective use of existing dedicated bus lanes and/or sections of bus-only priority at junctions. • Enhanced bus stop facilities to improve accessibility and boarding times. • Better integration with walking, wheeling and cycling routes to support multi-modal travel through the enhanced connectivity offered between the city centre and the Torvean mobility hub. These measures will allow buses to avoid delays caused by general traffic, reducing journey times and improving timetable adherence. A more consistent and predictable service enables operators to run more efficient schedules, potentially increasing service frequency without requiring a proportional increase in fleet or operational costs. By delivering faster and more reliable services, the project makes bus travel a more attractive and competitive alternative to the private car, particularly for commuting and short urban trips. This supports wider modal shift objectives, helping to reduce road congestion, lower transport-related carbon emissions, and improve air quality in the city. The project also plays a vital role in supporting the strategic vision for mobility hubs and intermodal connectivity within Inverness, as well as contributing towards the economic vitality of the area, supporting tourism.

Project Name	Inverness Bus Priority and Enforcement Measures
Questions	**Response**
	In addition, these improvements align with national and regional priorities, including the Highland BSIP and the Highland Local Transport Strategy objectives, which recognise that bus priority is essential for delivering high-quality, sustainable public transport.
Please provide max 300 words to demonstrate the strength and commitment of and to joint working between Local Transport Authorities and operators to support bus services.	The Highland Council, HITRANS and Bus Operators have a track record of working together to deliver improvements to the bus network in the Highlands. This commitment is evidenced through the voluntary bus partnership, or Bus Service Improvement Plan Partnership, of which the group, have collaboratively published their Service Improvement Plan, which guides service and network improvements for bus throughout the Highland Geography. This partnership is built on shared objectives to improve the reliability, efficiency, and attractiveness of bus services across Inverness and the wider Highland region. The proposals have been developed in close alignment with the Highland BSIP, which formalises joint working between transport authorities and operators. Through the BSIP, stakeholders have collectively identified key corridors as priorities for bus priority infrastructure investment, ensuring that the measures proposed are rooted in operational insight and passenger need. Regular engagement through the BSIP governance structure has informed the design of the project, with operators providing data, operational feedback, and input on measures to maximise reliability and passenger benefit. This co-development process ensures that infrastructure investment is closely tied to service delivery improvements and operational feasibility. There is a strong, ongoing commitment from all partners to monitor outcomes and adapt services to maximise the benefits of the project. The project is also integrated into wider regional transport planning and supports ambitions for decarbonisation and modal shift. This close collaboration between public and private sector partners demonstrates a unified approach to strengthening public transport, delivering on national and regional transport objectives, and ensuring long-term benefits for communities.
For construction projects over £0.5 million what operator 'match in kind' action and/or investment is proposed?	N/A
For pre-construction projects, does this have elected member buy in? For construction projects, has the project been signed off by the relevant elected members/committee? If not required please state this, or if required, what are the timescales associated with such approvals. (max 300 words)	N/A – Yes this is enforcement measures only and installation of bus infrastructure does not require committee approval.
Please provide confirmation that should funding be awarded in mid-May 2025 or earlier, that the project can be delivered by the end of March 2026.	Yes

Project Name	Inverness Bus Station - Re-location/re-imagination of the bus station
Questions	**Response**
Voluntary Partnership Priority of Bus Infrastructure Tier 2 Funding Proposals submitted	8
Partnership project contact (Name, job description, organisation, e-mail address and contact details)*	Julie Cromarty Sustainable Transport Team Leader Julie.cromarty@highland.gov.uk 01463 702004
Project manager project contact (Name, job description, organisation, e-mail address and contact details)*	Neil Young Active Travel Manager The Highland Council Neil.Young@highland.gov.uk 01463 702004
I confirm that I have read the privacy policy and consent to the data I provide being used as set out in the policy.	Yes
Project location – co-ordinates	https://maps.app.goo.gl/3Pf6kYuBR9txYLXY8
Project description	STPR2 Rec No. 43 identifies Inverness as one of four major stations earmarked for master planning work to establish future work required for them to meet NTS2 objectives. Aligning with current projects overseen by the Bus Partnership, HITRANS in partnership with Network Rail and The Highland Council have recently undertaken feasibility / case for change work to establish how Inverness Bus Station and Rail Station can be better integrated. The work has identified that Inverness Bus station is currently operating over its capacity. The Feasibility study being carried out by consultants Austin Smith: Lord is appraising options for relocating and increasing the size of bus station to better meet current and future demand. Following the completion of this work there is a need to undertake detailed public and stakeholder engagement as part of a preliminary appraisal of the options shortlisted in the initial study. This work will feed into the wider Inverness Masterplan work which is being led by Network Rail.  The figure above shows the different potential locations for Inverness Bus Station considered within the Initial feasibility study being undertaken by Austin Smith: Lord.

Project Name	Inverness Bus Station - Re-location/re-imagination of the bus station
Was this project identified through work undertaken through the Bus Partnership Fund? Please briefly outline details. (max 300 words)	Yes. The project brings together the work of the Highland Bus Partnership and Inverness Station Masterplan steering Group (STPR2 Rec 43). The Bus station is the terminus for each of the bus priority corridors which have been progressed through the Bus partnership Fund including A82 and Millburn Road. The bus station has departures to destinations within Inverness commuting catchment area and beyond to every major destination in the Highlands and beyond all major urban centres in Scotland. Through the Bus Partnership Stagecoach have already indicated that they are investing a significant amount of funding into the existing station to improve the existing waiting facilities and access for coaches. The feasibility work undertaken by Austin Smith: Lord has identified that a minimum of 14 stances are required compared to the existing 7 in order to satisfactorily cater for the existing volume of arrivals and departures. This project offers the opportunity to develop a proposal for an integrated transport interchange and hub to serve the Highlands and Islands.
What stage(s) of project are you seeking funding for	Preliminary / Detailed Appraisal
What is the total amount of funding you need to progress this project in 2025-26?	£100,000
What is the total amount of funding you are looking for from the Bus Infrastructure Fund Tier 2?	The appraisal will identify the estimated total cost of the preferred option.
Is this a multi-year project? Please provide cost details about the project if design or construction will span multiple financial years. If a project is multi-year, please make it clear what is proposed for 2025-26 and what is proposed for subsequent years.	This is a multi-year project with an indicative delivery timeframe as follows: • 2025-26: Preliminary Appraisal of shortlisted options including detailed stakeholder and community engagement. • 2026-27: Complete Detailed Appraisal. Outline Business Case. Detailed Design. • 2027-28: Full Business Case. • 2028-30: Tender Package and Construction. Future steps and timing will need to align with wider projects and policy; this piece of work directly feeds into the Inverness Station Masterplan and would also align with the RTS and LTS.
Please briefly (max 500 words) describe the proposed project. If a project is multi-year, please make it clear what is proposed for 2025-26 and what is proposed for subsequent years.	Funding is being sought to undertake the next stages of appraisal - preliminary and detailed – to identify an design a preferred option for providing a new Bus and coach station for Inverness that will serve both its catchment area but also coach services to both regional (including Skye, Fort William, Thurso and Ullapool) and national (Glasgow, Edinburgh, Aberdeen) destinations. It is expected that in 2025/26 the preliminary appraisal can be completed, and work commence on the detailed appraisal. It is envisaged that the detailed appraisal will be completed in 2026-2027 financial year. Significant engagement has already been undertaken with key transport stakeholders, but this funding will enable detailed engagement with wider stakeholders and public consultation. It will also enable the appraisal of any options which have been identified within the initial work undertaken by Austin Smith: Lord.
Please briefly (max 300 words) describe the key scheme objectives.	The initial work has identified objectives around three themes – People, Place and Process People • improved user experience (bus / train passengers, pedestrians, cyclists, car park users) • more comfort, convenience, safe, inclusive - supports vulnerable users • encourages increased bus and train patronage • encourages increased footfall, dwell time and local spend in the Station Quarter / City Centre • enables increased cycling and use of Active Travel Hub • increases diversity of users in the area (reflecting the local and visitor demographic) • removes barriers to inclusive accessibility for all (esp vulnerable users e.g. disabled) • improves connectivity / proximity to key destinations (train station, Old Town, Eastgate etc.). Place • enhances quality, look and feel of Station Quarter / City Centre; • improved connections / accessibility and acts as a City Centre gateway, • provides more people first public spaces, • improves townscape and respects heritage, • contribute to positive image / 1st impressions, • support thriving + vibrant city centre Process • optimising operational effectiveness, efficiency, compliance, safety, reliability, resilience in use

Project Name	Inverness Bus Station - Re-location/re-imagination of the bus station

Please set out the project management and other staffing or consultancy costs that you anticipate you will need to deliver this project.	The Highland Council is seeking funding towards resource to manage and oversee the delivery of the project, as well as consultancy support. This is as follows:
	
	2025-26
	• THC dedicated project management:
	  ○ BIF Tier 2 Programme Proposals by THC would require 10% project management costs. So if we are awarded all 8 proposals we would require £216,800
	• Consultancy Support:
	  ○ Preliminary / Detailed Appraisal - £100,000.

What costs associated with the above are you seeking from the Bus Infrastructure Fund Tier 2.	Funding is sought for all costs to be covered.
How will the project and its development demonstrate value for money/best value? Is the project supported by a business case (where applicable)? (max 300 words)	Inverness Station Masterplan has been identified in STPR2 Recommendation No 43 with the objective of developing plans for future work that: • accommodate passenger and, as appropriate, freight demand in line with sustainable travel • support net zero targets • coordinate with regional activity undertaken by other strategic partners. This project will build on Transport Scotland's support for the masterplan through the acquisition of land by Network Rail adjacent to Inverness Rail Station. This provides a rare opportunity for public partners including The Highland Council and HITRANS to work together to develop an ambitious vision for a regional transport interchange which will serve as a point of arrival for the Highlands and Islands. This includes: • Seamless interchange between train, bus + Multi Storey Car Park • Quality gateway to City Centre • Catalyst for Station Quarter mixed-use regen • Promote sustainable travel options • Enhance connections to northern quarter • Increase capacity of sustainable travel options – bus, rail and active travel
For construction projects, please confirm that your projects are construction ready. We are looking for confirmation that these are construction ready e.g. have no outstanding land ownership issues, all permissions are in place, design complete, monitoring and evaluation plan in place, cost estimates finalised, utilities surveys undertaken etc. (max 300 words)	N/A – project is at Appraisal stage.
Please provide max 500 words on how the project provides high-quality bus infrastructure which contribute to the four priorities of the National Transport Strategy (NTS2) vision – to reduce inequality, take climate action, help deliver inclusive growth and improve health and well-being.	The project positively contributes to the four NTS priorities as follows: • **Reduce Inequality:** With there being greater reliance on public transport by those who do not own or have access to a private car, investment in bus infrastructure can have a positive impact on enhancing access for all to employment, education, healthcare and other services. It also help negate the problem of forced car ownership in Highland where people feel they do not have an alternative but to own a car due to the lack of and unreliability of bus services. A relocated bus station would help transform the public transport offer in Lochaber, underpinning operations by a modern and fit for purpose facility that supports wider aspirations of improving connectivity and accessibility for all. • **Take Climate Action:** In the short-term, greenhouse gas emissions would increase due to construction activities undertaken to deliver the new bus station, including indirect emissions from the manufacture and transportation of materials as well as from emissions from fuel combusted by construction plant and vehicles. The infrastructure would be designed to be resilient to predicted impacts arising from current and future weather events and climatic conditions, and designed in accordance with current planning, design, engineering practice, and codes. A number of mitigation and adaptation measures, including sustainable drainage, would be considered to address potential risks. The shorter distance buses would be required to travel to access the relocated bus station and associated reduction in vehicle kilometres can be expected to positively impact on emissions. • **Help Deliver Inclusive Growth:** Fort William 2040 aims to create a thriving and sustainable town for all. 'A Connected Place' is a central theme with there being a need to maximise opportunities for a diverse range of transport and other connecting networks. A new bus station would help underpin this vision, supporting access to employment and education opportunities as well as sustainable tourism across the Lochaber area. • **Improve Health and Well-being:** An enhanced passenger waiting facility with built-in safety considerations to the design offers benefit in terms of real and perceived security, particularly for more vulnerable people travelling alone. A more attractive waiting facility that encourages more usage of the bus services can in turn provide

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	natural passive safety from more people using / being in the area. Furthermore, encouraging a mode shift to public transport inherently results in more active journeys as users are required to walk to bus stops/stations, with associated positive health impacts.
How does the project positively impact an area of higher deprivation (as identified by the Scottish Index of Multiple Deprivation (SIMD))? Are there any specific impacts on child poverty? (max 300 words)	The re-imagination of Inverness Bus Station delivers targeted benefits to areas identified as experiencing higher levels of deprivation, including neighbourhoods within Inverness that fall within the most deprived 15% of data zones according to the Scottish Index of Multiple Deprivation (SIMD), most deprived areas specifically Merkinch North, Inverness Merkinch East, Inverness South Kessock, Inverness Central and Longman, and Invergordon Strath Avenue such as parts of Raigmore, Longman, and the eastern city centre which face challenges related to access to affordable transport, employment, education, and services. Positive impacts of the project on areas of higher deprivation include: • **Improving Access and Affordability:** For residents in SIMD-identified areas, access to affordable, reliable public transport is essential for daily life. By prioritising buses and improving service efficiency along the Millburn Corridor, the project reduces journey times and improves reliability—making public transport more attractive, cost-effective, and accessible for low-income households. This helps address "transport poverty," where people are excluded from opportunities due to poor or unaffordable transport options. • **Supporting Children and Families:** The project is also expected to have a direct, positive impact on child poverty. In areas where families experience lower incomes and limited mobility, access to education, healthcare, and social opportunities can be constrained. The improved public transport infrastructure will enhance connectivity to key destinations such as schools (e.g., Millburn Academy), Inverness Campus, and child healthcare services. By improving access for families without private vehicles, the project helps reduce the disadvantage that transport barriers impose on children's life chances. • **Enabling Inclusive Mobility:** High-quality, inclusive infrastructure—such as step-free access, well-lit bus stops, and safe pedestrian routes—supports families with pushchairs, children walking to school, and those with additional mobility needs. By improving these aspects along a busy urban corridor, the project contributes to safer, more equitable travel for all. **Wider Social and Economic Benefits:** By connecting people in deprived areas more effectively to jobs, training, and essential services, this project contributes to a longer-term strategy for lifting individuals and families out of poverty. Improved public realm and safer streets also contribute to community well-being and resilience, particularly in areas that have historically been underserved by transport investment. In summary Inverness all displays some degree of variation in terms of deprivation. For households in lower ranked SIMD areas, access to reliable public transport is essential for daily life. By transforming the bus station facility in Inverness, the project enhances the public transport offer available to lower income households. This helps positively contribute to addressing 'transport poverty' where people are excluded from opportunities due to poor or unaffordable transport options. The project is also expected to have a direct, positive impact on child poverty. In areas where families experience lower incomes and limited mobility, access to education, healthcare and social opportunities can be constrained. The public transport infrastructure will enhance the journey experience to access key destinations for education, leisure and health. By improving the quality of public transport for families without private vehicles, the project helps reduce the disadvantage that transport barriers impose on young people.
Does this project contribute to any Strategic Transport Projects Review 2 recommendations? (max 300 words)	The project contributes to the following STPR2 recommendations: • **Recommendation 21 Improved public transport passenger interchange facilities:** This STPR2 recommendation seeks to improve public transport passenger facilities, including accessibility and quality enhancements. The STPR2 reporting notes that increasing the quality of passenger facilities would also improve the travel experience, especially benefiting those who do not have access to a car particularly those from the most deprived households. The opportunity to reduce barriers to public transport use, especially for those with reduced mobility or impaired vision or hearing and for those who are neurodiverse is highlighted. Relocation of the bus station in Inverness provides the opportunity to enhance the waiting environment through improved provision and facilities combined with the opportunity for placemaking enhancements. • **Recommendation 23 Smart, integrated public transport ticketing:** This STPR2 recommendation seeks to simplify how people store and pay for tickets with different public transport operators. Relocation of the bus station in Inverness provides the opportunity to enhance ticket purchase facilities, supporting the wider ambition of this recommendation. • **Recommendation 32 Trunk Road and Motorway network renewal for reliability, resilience and safety** – As part of this recommendation, STPR2 recommends an Integrated transport plan for Fort William to increase resilience and reliability on the trunk road to improve sustainable transport and enhance the sense of place in the local community. It is noted within the STPR2 reporting that this could potentially include online and offline improvements on the A82, including a new link road, with the removal of traffic from the already constrained corridor and release of capacity on the existing A82 to become a sustainable travel corridor. The relocation of the bus station would serve to complement and further reinforce the aspirations of this recommendation to enhance sustainable transport provision in Inverness.
Fit with the partnership area's overall strategy for integrated transport, to encourage a modal shift from cars to more sustainable transport modes to reduce emissions.	This project is a key component of the Highland Bus Service Improvement Partnership's (BSIP) wider area strategy to deliver an integrated, low-carbon transport system that reduces car dependency and supports a shift toward more sustainable modes, including public transport, walking, wheeling and cycling. Developed in alignment with the Highland BSIP, HITRANS Regional Transport Strategy and Highland Local Transport Strategy, the project supports the shared ambition to create a well-connected, inclusive and environmentally responsible transport network.

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	By providing an accessible and high quality bus station that also brings operational efficiencies, the project addresses a major barrier to modal shift - the attractiveness of bus services in terms of the quality of infrastructure as well as the competitiveness of services with other modes. In summary, the project is fully aligned with the Highland BSIP's goals for integrated and sustainable transport. It supports long-term modal shift, helps meet net zero targets and plays a vital role in creating a greener, healthier transport system within Inverness and beyond.
Please provide max 500 words on how the project is in line with the National Transport Strategy 2 sustainable travel and investment hierarchies, including to prioritise bus over other types of motorised traffic and ensuring integration with other modes.	This project is firmly aligned with the principles of the National Transport Strategy 2 (NTS2), including the Sustainable Travel Hierarchy and the Sustainable Investment Hierarchy which guide decision-making to prioritise sustainable, inclusive, and environmentally responsible transport modes. **Sustainable Travel Hierarchy** NTS2 places walking, wheeling and cycling at the top of the Sustainable Travel Hierarchy followed by public transport - particularly buses - as preferred alternatives to private car use. This project supports the hierarchy in practice by: • Enhancing bus infrastructure to improve waiting facilities, making public transport a more attractive choice for residents, workers and visitors. • Integrating the bus station further into the fabric of the wider transport network, including the local bus service offer, and town centre itself to increase the profile and prominence of bus travel within and to / from Fort William. • Creating the opportunity for safer, more inclusive spaces underpinned by place-making that puts non-motorised users first. By delivering a new bus station that is modern and fit for purpose, the project directly supports the NTS2 vision for a transport system that reduces car dependency and encourages more sustainable, healthy travel behaviours. **Sustainable Investment Hierarchy** The Sustainable Investment Hierarchy prioritises maintaining and optimising existing infrastructure, then making better use of the network, before considering new infrastructure investment. The project reflects the investment hierarchy by: • Targeting investment on infrastructure with a focus to encourage sustainable travel and support travel behaviour choices away from private car trips. • Optimising available land by repurposing car parking space to the betterment of the sustainable transport offer. • Delivering best value by proportionate investment in new infrastructure that is centred on sustainable travel and which will help unlock wider network benefits across the town's transport system as well as support broader development proposals for Inverness and the wider Highlands. The project also aligns with the investment hierarchy's goal of supporting broader policy objectives, including decarbonisation, air quality improvement, and social inclusion. By enhancing the passenger experience and enabling greater uptake of public transport alongside optimising bus operations, the project contributes to these outcomes.
Please provide max 500 words on how the project improves bus journey times and provide greater reliability, by prioritising bus over other types of traffic thereby encouraging mode shift and improved bus services. (Not compulsory, however projects that contribute to this will be prioritised).	The relocated bus station would enhance the operational efficiency of all services that use the bus station as it would provide more direct access to and from the trunk road. There is also scope to further integrate the bus station with the rail station and active travel modes to achieve a fully integrated multi modal interchange. These aspirations will also be connected and aligned with the work proposals for Inverness City and surrounding area for a mobility hub network which aims to aid in realising the full benefits of the regional economic growth of the green freeport opportunities by addressing the urgent need to reverse commuting patterns and to achieve a more sustainable way of moving people in and around Inverness. Improving the integration of local and longer distance bus services and aligning with the mobility hub aspirations through relocation of the bus station would improve the attractiveness of public transport, particularly for multi-modal and inter-modal trips where integration is critical.
Please provide max 300 words to demonstrate the strength and commitment of and to joint working between Local Transport Authorities and operators to support bus services.	The Highland Council, HITRANS and bus operators have a track record of working together to deliver improvements to the transport network in the Highlands. This commitment is evidenced through the voluntary Highland Bus Service Improvement Partnership (BSIP) underpinned by the partnership's Service Improvement Plan which guides service and network improvements for bus throughout the Highland geography. The BSIP is built on shared objectives to improve the reliability, efficiency and attractiveness of bus services across Lochaber and the wider Highland region. On 5 May 2021 the Highland Council Infrastructure, Environment & Economy Committee agreed to the Council initiating a BSIP in Highland. The partnership comprises the following members: • Highlands & Islands Enterprise. • HITRANS. • Shiel Buses. • Stagecoach. • The Highland Council. The Highland BSIP is independently chaired by a respected figure who has held several senior management roles in the bus industry. Through the Highland BSIP, stakeholders have collectively identified priority corridors / areas for bus infrastructure investment, ensuring that measures are rooted in operational insight and passenger need to provide a targeted response to achieve success.

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	Regular engagement through the BSIP governance structure has informed the project to date with operators providing data, operational feedback and input to maximise reliability and passenger benefit. This co-development process ensures that infrastructure investment is closely tied to service delivery improvements and operational feasibility. There is a strong, ongoing commitment from all partners to monitor outcomes and adapt services to maximise the benefits of the project. The project is also integrated into wider regional transport planning and supports ambitions for decarbonisation and modal shift. This close collaboration between public and private sector partners demonstrates a unified approach to strengthening public transport, delivering on national, regional as well as local transport objectives and ensuring long-term benefits for communities across Highland.
For construction projects over £0.5 million what operator 'match in kind' action and/or investment is proposed?	N/A – project is not at construction stage.
For pre-construction projects, does this have elected member buy in? For construction projects, has the project been signed off by the relevant elected members/committee? If not required please state this, or if required, what are the timescales associated with such approvals. (max 300 words)	Yes through the previous committee agreements under BPF however project specifics will be subject to the normal committee process as the project progresses and with agreement with other partners through the Inverness Station Masterplan which has multiple partners including Network Rail, HITRANS and the Highland Council. N/A – project is not at construction stage.
Please provide confirmation that should funding be awarded in mid-May 2025 or earlier, that the project can be delivered by the end of March 2026.	Yes