

Agenda Item	7
Report No	HC/41/25

The Highland Council

Committee: The Highland Council

Date: 11 December 2025

Report Title: Invest Highland – Growing the Highlands

Report By: Assistant Chief Executive – Place

1 Purpose/Executive Summary

1.1 This report presents Invest Highland, (www.investhighland.com), a resource designed to stimulate and promote investment opportunities and demonstrate the benefits of doing business in Highland. Invest Highland enables us to focus on the key drivers for growth across our communities including housing, clean energy, road and digital connectivity, and public services.

1.2 Invest Highland is not only a space for highlighting inward investment opportunities but sets out the existing public sector investment being made, the ambition of the area for future development to enable growth and the local investment opportunities at community and place level.

Invest Highland has been developed to:

- Attract private sector investment to Highland
- Demonstrate the ambitions of the Council and its partners in the public, private and third sectors in Highland for the area
- Demonstrate the investment already being made in Highland by the Council and its partners to realise these ambitions
- Highlight the potential areas for investment at a Highland, regional and local level
- Attract investment in Highland infrastructure and set out the case for a future Growth Deal for Highland

1.3 To complement the online platform, the Council has developed an Investment Prospectus for 2026 (**Appendix 2**) to bring together all major investment opportunities in one place. The purpose of this is to be used at Scottish Cities Week and equivalent events to highlight the priority investment opportunities.

1.4 Invest Highland is a strategic framework designed to position the Highlands as a leading destination for sustainable investment, with a core purpose of showcasing investment opportunities across the region and provide a tool for public and private sector partnership, enabling the Council to align local ambition with national priorities and global opportunities. By creating the conditions for success - through infrastructure, planning, and investment readiness - the Council will continue to play a proactive role in shaping the region's future.

- 1.5 The economic transformation of the region is underpinned by strong public sector collaboration and long-term investment. Backed by both UK and Scottish Governments, the region's growth aligns with national ambitions for clean energy and inclusive, place-based development. Invest Highland therefore also sets out the areas for potential public sector investment by UK and Scottish Governments through a future Growth Deal or similar scale investment.
- 1.4 Highland Council and its partners in the public and private sector are paving the way to realise the region's economic potential with £11.1 billion of long-term commitments planned to invest in key public services and infrastructure and to create the right conditions for private capital investment and business growth. The Council's Highland Investment Plan has agreed over £2 billion of investment over 20 years across the region, in transport, infrastructure, schools and community Points of Delivery. Additionally, an anticipated £400 million in retained non-domestic rates from the Freeport sites will be reinvested in local communities, supported by a strategy that is co-designed with the Inverness and Cromarty Firth Green Freeport Company. This sits alongside a wide range of other commitments, including the £315 million Inverness and Highland City Region Deal, the Social Value from Renewables Charter, Tourism Infrastructure Investments and many other smaller community regeneration funding streams.
- 1.5 Invest Highland sets out not only the inward investment opportunities and the regional infrastructure ambitions but also those of communities as articulated in Area Place Plans. Our local priorities are just as critical in enabling growth and development within our communities and supporting and enable investment in these areas.
- 1.6 By creating the right conditions for investment, the region is already attracting private investment at scale. £400 million investment into Ardersier Port backed by £100 million from the Scottish National Investment Bank and National Wealth Fund, £24 million for Kishorn Port from Highlands and Islands Enterprise, £350 million into the Sumitomo manufacturing facility backed by Highlands & Islands Enterprise and the Scottish Government, £60 million into Port of Cromarty Firth from the UK Government FLOWMIS fund, as well as £25m Green Freeport Seed Capital funding being made available to accelerate key projects which in turn will stimulate development.
- 1.7 Invest Highland will be an evolving and iterative resource, to be updated as new priorities, projects and opportunities for investment arise. Members are asked to consider the resources developed to date but also contribute to its development over the coming months.

2 Recommendations

- 2.1 Members are asked to:
- i. Consider and **Agree** the aims and purpose of Invest Highland as set out and articulated on the [Invest Highland](#) online platform;
 - ii. **Agree** the Invest Highland Prospectus set out at Appendix 2 for use at Scottish Cities Week (20-22 January 2026) and at other inward investment forums over 2026, noting that updates will be made periodically to reflect emerging opportunities;

- iii. **Agree** and note the use of the Beconnected online platform for local place priorities; and
- iv. **Agree** a Member workshop on the Inverness and Cromarty Firth Green Freeport's retained Non Domestic Rates Strategy will be held in January with a report on the Strategy to be considered at Economy and Infrastructure Committee in February 2026.

3 Implications

- 3.1 **Resource** – Invest Highland is being managed within existing resources within the Economic Development team, utilising specialist web support as required. The Invest Highland prospectus has been developed in conjunction with nHUB, as part of their existing contract with the Council.
- 3.2 **Legal** - There are no legal impacts arising directly from this report.
- 3.3 **Risk** - There are no risk implications arising directly from this report.
- 3.4 **Health and Safety (risks arising from changes to plant, equipment, process, or people)** – There are no Health and Safety risk implications arising directly from this report.
- 3.5 **Gaelic** – One of the growth sectors of Invest Highland is the Gaelic economy, with Gaelic culture a contributor to the narrative of the wider lifestyle and cultural opportunities of investing in Highland. Opportunities also exist to incorporate Gaelic branding and messaging within promotional materials.

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 **Integrated Impact Assessment - Summary**
- 4.4 An Integrated Impact Assessment screening has been undertaken and the conclusions have been subject to the relevant Manager Review and Approval.
- 4.5 The Screening process has concluded that there are potentially positive impacts in terms of Poverty and Socio-economic factors due to the aims of Invest Highland being centred on attracting private sector investment to the region and demonstrating the need for investment in public infrastructure and services to support the sustainable economic growth of the area. There were no negative impacts identified. Members are asked to consider the summary in **Appendix 1** to support the decision-making process.

4.6	Impact Assessment Area	Conclusion of Screening
	Equality	No impact
	Socio-economic	Positive impact
	Human Rights	No impact
	Children's Rights and Well-being	Positive impact
	Island and Mainland Rural	Positive impact
	Climate Change	No impact
	Data Rights	No impact

5 Background

- 5.1 The Highlands is entering a new chapter of economic transformation. With its scale, natural assets, and strategic location, the region is uniquely positioned to lead Scotland's transition to a greener, fairer economy. This provides a unique opportunity to attract broader investment to Highland, encouraging business, investors and developers to come and do business in the area.
- 5.2 This comes at a time when public sector investment and ambition is high. Highland Council and its partners in the public and private sector are paving the way to realise the region's economic potential with £11.1 billion of long-term commitments. The Council's own Highland Investment Plan has agreed over £2 billion of investment over 20 years across the region, in transport, roads, infrastructure, schools and community facilities. Additionally, an anticipated £500 million in retained non-domestic rates from the Freeport sites will be reinvested in local communities. This sits alongside a wide range of other commitments, including the £315 million Inverness and Highland City Region Deal and the commitments from the Highland Housing Challenge, which anticipates the need for 24,000 houses over the next 10 years equating to around £6 billion public and private sector investment in the area.
- 5.3 [Invest Highland](#) is the Council's online investment platform. It was initially developed in 2024 with the aim of showcasing the region's inward investment opportunities, replacing the previous 'Enterprising Highland' website. As time has progressed, Invest Highland is being reimagined as not only a space for highlighting inward investment opportunities but the existing public sector investment being made, the ambition of the area for future development to enable growth and the local investment opportunities at community and place level.
- 5.4 To complement the online platform, the Council has developed an Investment Prospectus for 2026 to bring together all major investment opportunities in one place. The purpose of this is to be used at Scottish Cities Week and equivalent events to highlight the priority investment opportunities, including housing, clean energy, connectivity, and public services.
- 5.5 This paper introduces both the Invest Highland online platform and the complementary investment prospectus and sets out next steps for the development of these resources over the coming months.

6. Invest Highland – Online Platform

6.1 The purpose of Invest Highland is to:

- Attract private sector investment to Highland
- Demonstrate the ambitions of the Council and its partners in the public, private and third sectors in Highland for the area
- Demonstrate the investment already being made in Highland by the Council and its partners to realise these ambitions
- Highlight the potential areas for investment at a Highland, regional and local level
- To attract investment in Highland infrastructure and set out the case for a future Growth Deal for Highland

6.2 The content of Invest Highland has been prepared in collaboration with key partner agencies, such as Highlands and Islands Enterprise (HIE), Scottish Development International (SDI), the Scottish Government's Investment Unit and key private sector stakeholders, such as Inverness & Cromarty Firth Green Freeport and organisations associated with specific identified investment opportunities. The new structure will comprise of four key elements Our Growth Sectors, Our Priorities, Our Places and Our People. The aims and focus of each is summarised below, with further details in **appendix 3**.

6.3 Our Growth Sectors

- **Purpose:** to attract inward investment and business to Highland, showcasing Highland as an dynamic and supportive place to do business.
- Acts as a sign posting platform, directing prospective investors and businesses to sources of support services.
- Based around key growth sectors including:
 - Inverness and Cromarty Firth Green Freeport
 - Clean Energy
 - Sustainable Tourism
 - Space
 - Food & Drink
 - Life Sciences
 - Creative Industries and the Gaelic Economy
 - Data Centres
 - Residential

6.4 Our Priorities

- **Purpose:** to demonstrate the scale of investment already being made to grow the economy in Highland and develop the infrastructure needed to support the area and highlight the ambition for the area.
- **Partnering for growth** - the Council's, and other public sector partners role, is to act as an enabling authority - creating the conditions for investment, fostering collaboration, and ensuring that growth is inclusive and sustainable. An estimated £11.1 billion of investment is forecast over the next 20 years. This connects local priorities with national ambitions and international markets.

- **Future Growth Deals:** this section also highlights the areas for potential public sector investment through a future Growth Deal or equivalent investment. This includes the potential for specific Growth Deal related to rural housing.
- This section of the web-site highlights the following opportunities:
 - Highland Investment Plan – outlining the commitment already made to invest £2b into local transport and roads infrastructure and schools and community facilities.
 - Highland Housing Challenge – setting out the Partnership Commitment and actions required to deliver housing across all tenures across the area over the next 10 years which will result in £6 billion of investment over the next 10 years. This includes specific actions to address challenges related to the financial and development of rural housing, along with new approaches to financing and building capacity to accelerate development.
 - Green Freeport Non Domestic Rates Retention Strategy – the Green Freeport's retained non-domestic rates (rNDR) investment plan will ensure incremental NDR growth on Freeport tax sites delivers long-term benefits for the Highland economy. It will direct locally retained revenues toward skills, infrastructure, innovation, regeneration, and a fair Net Zero transition, while leveraging additional funding and aligning with regional priorities. Governance will follow a public-private 'dual key' approach, with Highland Council as the accountable body ensuring transparency, compliance, and democratic oversight. Further details can be found at section 8.
 - Strategic Tourism Infrastructure Plan - a framework for sustainable investment in visitor facilities and identifies the priorities for improving infrastructure and managing pressures at key destinations including transport, parking, and amenities. The delivery of such infrastructure is closely related to the outcomes of the Visitor Levy next steps report, which is presented elsewhere on this agenda.
 - The Inverness and Highland City Region Deal (2017-2027- A major economic development initiative designed to transform Inverness and the wider Highland region into a hub of digital opportunity, innovation, and sustainable growth. Since the signing of the Deal in 2017, both public and private investments have continued to grow, contributing to an overall Deal value of £428.7m. This growth underscores the strong commitment from all stakeholders to drive economic development and innovation in the region.
 - Future Growth Deal Projects – these are regional projects required to support growth and development across the area, including both physical infrastructure – roads, harbours, social and cultural infrastructure e.g. hospitals, sports and leisure
 - Examples of these include:
 - Achnasheen to Kishorn road upgrade
 - Stromeferry Bypass
 - Portree, Lochinver and Kinlochbervie harbour regeneration and investment
 - New Belford Hospital
 - Culture and Leisure investments across the region

6.5 Our Places

- Purpose: to highlight the potential areas for investment at a local level, showcasing the priorities articulated in area place plans
- To be delivered through the BeConnected website, the platform will:
 - Highlight Area Place Plan Priorities
 - Enable communities to put forward projects for investment or to be funded through community benefit routes and the Highland Project Bank
 - Primary means for groups to access regeneration funding
 - Provide opportunities for communities to connect with groups in other areas and signpost groups to further resources or support.

6.6 Our People

- Purpose: to demonstrate the benefits of living and working in Highland, focusing on lifestyle, culture and place
- This element focuses on talent attraction, designed to present a welcoming and vibrant image of the region. Its aim is to attract individuals who can contribute positively to the area's economic growth and social development. Ensuring there are the appropriate skills pathways to create a skilled workforce across both our core sectors e.g. construction as well as our emerging sectors e.g. renewables, is a central priority of public and private sector partners in Highland. This links closely to the plans for a construction skills academy, as reported to Council in October. Workforce North is the partnership approach to growing and expanding the Highland workforce and a shared Regional Skills Plan has been developed and can be found at **Appendix 4**.
- This highlights:
 - The benefits of living and working in Highland
 - The training and skills opportunities available at UHI and other higher education providers and work being undertaken to develop this through the partnership Workforce North Strategy

7. Invest Highland – Investment Prospectus 2026: A region of unique opportunities

- 7.1 To complement the online platform, the Council has developed a standalone Investment Prospectus 2026: A region of unique opportunities. This can be found at **Appendix 2**. Its purpose is to showcase priority investment opportunities and reaffirm the Council's commitment to inclusive economic growth, co-investing in areas such as housing, clean energy, connectivity, and public services. The prospectus will be used at Scottish Cities Week and other major investment forums throughout 2026.
- 7.2 The document sets out a strategic approach that positions the Highlands as a competitive, resilient, and future-ready region, underpinned by strong public-private partnerships and aligned with the Scottish Government's *Team Scotland* investment ethos. It also connects to the Scottish Government's newly launched [InvestScotland](#) portal.
- 7.3 A key feature of the prospectus is its Partnering for Growth theme, which highlights how public sector leadership and co-investment are creating the right conditions for investment. It sets out how shared leadership and co-investment reduce risk, unlock

large-scale projects, and ensure benefits reach communities. This section demonstrates the region's commitment to working collectively to deliver long-term economic transformation.

- 7.4 The document also shines a spotlight on Regional Opportunities, showcasing the distinct strengths, strategic investments, and unique assets that define West Highlands, Inner Moray Firth, and Caithness & Sutherland.
- 7.5 By presenting a unified vision, the prospectus highlights the Highlands as a leading destination for transformational investment. It complements the Council's Highland Investment Plan and supports collaboration across sectors, leveraging the region's natural assets and strategic location to deliver sustainable prosperity.

8. Green Freeport – Non Domestic Rates Strategy

- 8.1 An important piece of the “jigsaw” is the preparation by the Green Freeport Company of the retained Non Domestic Rates Strategy, in conjunction with the Council. This is currently underway and will be the subject of discussion over the coming weeks and months ahead before final agreement by the Economy and Infrastructure Committee.
- 8.2 The forecasted income from the retained NDR is estimated to be up to £547 million over a 25-year year period. The investment plan prepared by the Green Freeport must complement regional strategies and priorities.
- 8.3 The objective of the NDR programme is to allocate net retained NDR revenues to maximise long term sustainable and inclusive economic net gains to the Highlands that promote:
 - Skills and employment
 - Regeneration
 - A Fair Net Zero transition
 - Productivity, and
 - Trade and investment

The key early years investment priorities should be targeted to Skills and Employment to complement Council's investment priorities.

9. Next Steps

- 9.1 The next phase of work will focus on strengthening the Invest Highland online platform as a core tool for engagement and delivery. The Council, along with its partners, is committed to developing Invest Highland further over the coming months, and to include a prioritised pipeline of projects aligned to each priority area and to augment this with sufficient detail to highlight the investment opportunity.
- 9.2 Over the coming months, the Council will develop the content further, ensuring it provides clear, investor-ready content and reflects the priorities of our communities, partners, and national strategies. This will involve close collaboration with government, industry, and regional stakeholders to broaden the scope of opportunities and remove barriers to investment.

- 9.3 At a regional level, the intention is to further grow the current content. This will be supported by direct engagement with Members to identify future development projects to be added to the site. This will be complemented by updated mapping of these local priorities.
- 9.4 Locally, the linked Beconnected platform will be launched, and communities encouraged to add local projects and activity onto the site. Awareness raising will also begin with contractors who may wish to support particular projects through their community benefit activity and with developers through negotiation around the social value charter.
- 9.5 A structured engagement plan will be implemented to secure buy-in from key audiences, including public investment institutions, private sector partners, and local communities. Invest Highland will remain a live resource, updated regularly to capture emerging opportunities and policy developments, ensuring the Highlands continues to lead Scotland's transition to a green and inclusive economy.
- 9.6 The Invest Highland Prospectus and accompanying online resource will be launched at Scottish Cities Week and used at other major investment forums throughout 2026. This will provide an ideal opportunity to showcase priority investment opportunities within Highland and the ambitions and investment already being realised across our communities.

Designation: Assistant Chief Executive - Place

Date: 26 November 2025

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Appendices: Appendix 1 - Integrated Impact Assessment Summary
Appendix 2 - Investment Prospectus
Appendix 3 – Invest Highland Summary
Appendix 4 – Regional Skills Plan

Integrated Impact Assessment – Summary

Proposal description: Invest Highland is a suite of resources designed to stimulate investment and showcase the ambition and opportunities of doing business in Highland. It aims to position the region as an attractive destination for investors by promoting its economic strengths, infrastructure, and growth potential.

Key considerations

- The proposal supports **inclusive economic development** and aligns with strategic priorities for regeneration.
- Positive socio-economic impacts are anticipated through **job creation, skills development, and business growth**.

The screening process identified potentially positive impacts in relation to poverty reduction and socio-economic outcomes, along with positive impacts on children's rights and rural areas. This is primarily due to the core aims of Invest Highland, which focus on:

- Attracting private sector investment into the Highland region.
- Highlighting the need for strategic public infrastructure and services to enable sustainable economic growth.
- Creating employment opportunities and supporting inclusive growth, which can contribute to reducing inequalities and improving quality of life.

No adverse impacts were identified across equality, human rights, or environmental dimensions.

No negative impacts were identified during the assessment. The proposal is therefore considered to align with the Council's objectives for economic development and regeneration.



Invest Highland Prospectus

A region of unique opportunities

2026



Foreword

Facal-toisich

This prospectus sets out a bold vision for the Highlands – a region rich in opportunity, powered by nature, and driven by its people.

We are entering a new chapter. With a range of growing industries, **£41b** in renewable energy projects, the Inverness & Cromarty Firth Green Freeport, and major infrastructure investment, the Highlands is becoming a global destination for investment and sustainable development.

But this is not just about economic growth – it's about creating lasting benefits for our communities. Investment here means good jobs, better housing, stronger public services, and opportunities for young people to stay, thrive, and build their futures in the Highlands.

The Highland Council is proud to be working in partnership with both governments, industry, and communities to support this transformation. We invite you to be part of it – to co-invest in a region that's ready, resilient, and rooted in community.

Councillor Raymond Bremner
Leader, The Highland Council



Discover more and explore opportunities, email:
invest@highland.gov.uk
or contact us on LinkedIn:
[linkedin.com/company/invest-highland](https://www.linkedin.com/company/invest-highland)

Contents Clàr-innse

This prospectus has been developed in partnership with Scottish Government, Scottish Development International (SDI), and Highlands and Islands Enterprise (HIE) and connects into national level activity including the Invest Scotland portal at scotland.org.



Why Invest in Highland?

4



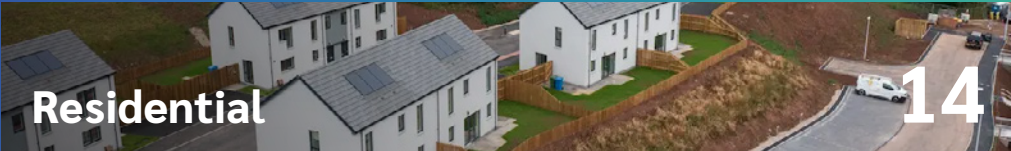
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Why Invest in Highland?

Carson a nì thu tasgadh sa Ghàidhealtachd?

The Highland region is at the forefront of a generational opportunity to reshape Scotland's economic landscape.

As the largest local authority in the UK, by landmass and coastline, the Highlands offer a unique blend of scale, natural assets, and innovation across multiple sectors. With over **£41b of renewable energy projects** in the pipeline, a thriving ecosystem of high-growth sectors, and the transformative potential of the Inverness & Cromarty Firth Green Freeport (the Green Freeport), the region is poised to lead the transition to a greener, fairer economy. This prospectus sets out our ambition to unlock inclusive and sustainable growth, backed by strategic investment, strong partnerships, and a commitment to empower communities across the Highlands. With our unmatched economic potential, we stand ready.



Why Invest in Highland?

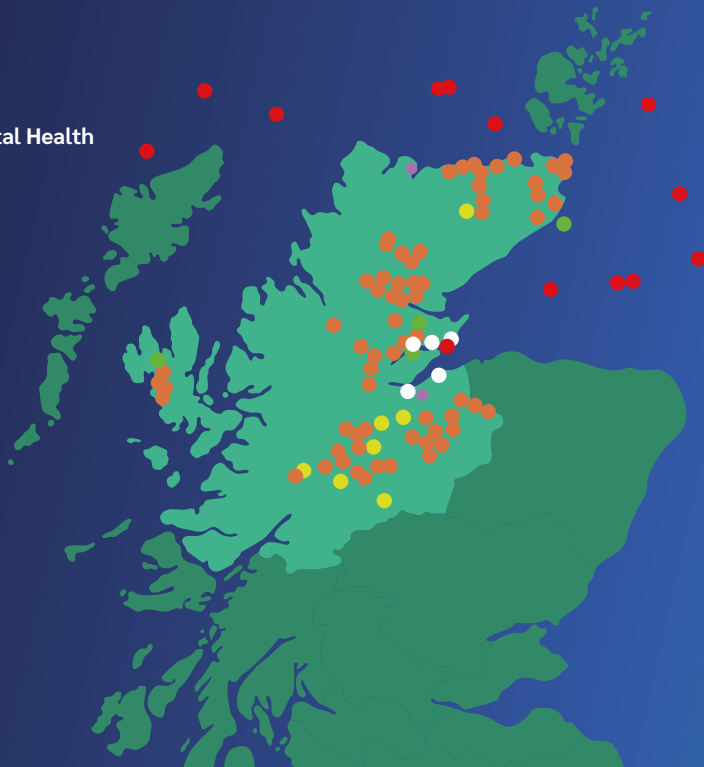
Carson a nì thu tasgadh sa Ghàidhealtachd?

Economy

The Highlands is a renewable energy powerhouse, with over **100 projects valued at £41b**, positioning the region at the heart of the UK and Scotland's clean energy transition. As home to the Green Freeport – part of the UK's flagship Freeports programme the area offers diverse opportunities across high-growth sectors including clean energy, life sciences, marine biotechnology, creative industries, and space. We have a strong culture of social enterprise and a skilled talent pipeline, supported by the University of the Highlands and Islands' **36,000+ students**, which further strengthens the region's economic potential.

Map Legend

- Green Freeport
- Life Sciences, Digital Health & Social Care
- Natural Capital
- Offshore Wind
- Onshore Wind
- Green Hydrogen



Connectivity

The Highlands is well-connected by air, rail, road, sea, and digital infrastructure. Inverness Airport serves nearly **one million passengers** annually, with direct links to major UK cities and select international destinations. Rail connections link Inverness to Glasgow, Edinburgh, Aberdeen, and London and **over £400m** has recently been invested on improvements. Strategic investment is enhancing transport routes, including a **£3.7b** upgrade to the A9 from Perth to Inverness and improved ferry links to Orkney and the Hebrides. Digital connectivity is expanding through the **£600m R100** programme and a further **£60m investment** in Highland Broadband. A further **£7b** investment by SSEN Transmission is strengthening the region's electricity grid, supporting future growth.



Extensive
ferry links



Inverness
Airport



Rail lines to Glasgow,
Edinburgh and London



Significant road
connections



£7b in grid
investment



£60M in broadband
investment

Why Invest in Highland?

Carson a nì thu tasgadh sa Ghàidhealtachd?

Lifestyle & Culture

The Highlands offers an exceptional quality of life, combining breathtaking natural landscapes with a strong sense of community and wellbeing.

Residents and visitors enjoy access to world-class outdoor pursuits - **hiking, skiing, kayaking, and wildlife watching** - set against iconic backdrops of **lochs, mountains, forests, and 5,000 km of coastline.**

The region's cultural identity adds depth to this lifestyle. **Rich Gaelic traditions, music, and storytelling** sit alongside **historic castles, renowned seafood, and festivals such as the Highland Games and Tartan Heart Festival**, creating a distinctive sense of place.

With a low crime rate, vibrant communities, and a generally more affordable cost of living than many other UK regions, the Highlands is a place where lifestyle and wellbeing thrive. This is further supported by multi-million-pound investment in education, ensuring families have access to high-quality primary and secondary schools in safe, nurturing environments - many of which actively promote Gaelic learning.



Inverness & Cromarty Firth Green Freeport

Saor-phort Uaine Inbhir Nis & Linne Chrombaidh

Powering the UK's Green Revolution

The **Green Freeport** is Europe's strategic hub for renewable energy – and is rapidly emerging as a global magnet for **green investment**.

This dynamic public-private partnership brings together prime sites at **Ardersier, Cromarty Firth (including Port of Nigg)**, and **Inverness** to form Scotland's renewable-energy powerhouse – combining cross-sector collaboration, world-class infrastructure and direct access to Europe's most advanced offshore-wind resources.

As part of the UK's flagship Freeports programme, the Green Freeport offers a powerful package of incentives, including **full business-rates relief, employer National Insurance reductions, enhanced capital allowances, and simplified customs and VAT processes**. These measures create one of the UK's most competitive environments for sustainable, long-term investment.

Strategically located near key offshore wind leasing areas (ScotWind & INTOG), the Green Freeport provides unrivalled access for offshore wind supply chains and emerging hydrogen markets. Its deep-water infrastructure and established engineering expertise make it ideal for large-scale fabrication, logistics, and energy transition industries.



With over **£6.5b of planned investment** over **25 years** and **11,300 long-term jobs** projected in the Highlands (and significantly more UK-wide), the Green Freeport will be a cornerstone of the UK's drive to net zero – delivering transformational growth for the Highlands, for Scotland and for the UK.

For investors, developers, and global partners, the Green Freeport offers a unique opportunity to help shape the UK's green future – **delivering inward investment, innovation, and lasting sustainability for the region and its communities**.



£6.5b

of planned investment

£547m

of Retained Business Rates in the area

18,300

jobs across the UK
– **11,300** will be in
the Highlands

Inverness & Cromarty Firth Green Freeport (ICFGF)

Saor-phort Uaine Inbhir Nis & Linne Chrombaidh (ICFGF)



Ardersier Energy Transition Facility

Description:

The UK's largest brownfield port is being redeveloped into Scotland's largest offshore wind development facility on the North Sea coast, capable of hosting and supporting gigawatt-scale projects.

Investment Type:

Offshore wind and other green sectors.

Landowner:

Haventus / Ardersier Port Limited.

Location:

Moray Firth, Inverness-shire – Ardersier Tax Site.

Size:

153ha and >650m of quayside with a further 1 kilometre of quay development planned.

Status:

Site scheduled to be operational end 2025.

Timescales:

Immediate.



Highland Deephaven

Description:

Industrial estate with large areas of brownfield land pre-approved for industrial development and substantial on-site infrastructure, including an existing causeway.

Investment Type:

Manufacturing, research and operational facilities for the growing renewables industry.

Landowner:

Highland Deephaven Ltd.

Location:

Cromarty Firth.

Size:

50ha brownfield site approved for development.

Timescales:

Immediate.



Inverness Campus

Description:

A thriving community of technology and life sciences organisations.

Investment Type:

Technology, life sciences, renewables, advanced manufacturing and light engineering.

Landowner:

Highlands & Islands Enterprise.

Location:

Inverness – Inverness tax site.

Size:

10.9ha of space for development within tax site.

Timescales:

Immediate.

Inverness & Cromarty Firth Green Freeport (ICFGF)

Saor-phort Uaine Inbhir Nis & Linne Chrombaidh (ICFGF)



Port of Cromarty Firth

Description:

A strategic hub for offshore wind – combining proven infrastructure, prime location, and decades of energy expertise to support large-scale deployment and long-term growth.

Investment Type:

Offshore wind.

Landowner:

Trust Port.

Location:

Cromarty Firth.

Size:

12ha laydown area and 372m of quayside.

Timescales:

Immediate.



Port of Inverness

Description:

A sheltered natural deep-water harbour providing renewable energy companies heavy load assembly and extensive storage areas with quayside access.

Investment Type:

Onshore wind.

Landowner:

Port of Inverness (Trust Port).

Location:

Inverness – Inverness tax site.

Size:

30ha and 640m planned quayside.

Timescales:

Immediate.



Port of Nigg

Description:

UK's leading marshalling port for offshore wind with the largest drydock in Europe, in-house services and accommodation and subsea cable manufacturing facilities being in operation on site from 2026.

Investment Type:

Offshore wind and cabling manufacturing.

Landowner:

Sumitomo with backing from Scottish Government, HIE and Scottish Enterprise.

Location:

Cromarty Firth.

Size:

100ha laydown and storage site with 1,200m deepwater quay.

Timescales:

Immediate.

Clean Energy Lùth glan

Scotland's Natural Powerhouse

Highland is not only the UK's largest generator of clean energy – it is where that energy becomes industry. By combining renewable generation, advanced manufacturing, digital infrastructure, and innovation, Highland transforms surplus power into long-term prosperity – powering the UK's Net Zero future while building its own.

Highland is leading Europe's renewable energy transition, with unmatched natural assets driving innovation across **offshore wind**, **hydro**, **marine**, and **low carbon technologies**. Developments are being increasingly designed to benefit communities through job creation and local investment.

Clean-energy infrastructure is driving the creation of industrial clusters – linking fabrication, logistics, maintenance, and digital sectors around the Green Freeport sites. This creates high-value jobs and builds domestic supply chains critical to UK energy security.

£43-52b
in live and
emerging
opportunities



An impressive
7,826GWh
hours of electricity
was generated from
renewable sources in
Highland in 2024.

Clean Energy

Lùth glan

Scotland's Natural Powerhouse



Scale of Investment Opportunity

£43-52b in live and emerging opportunities across renewable generation, energy infrastructure, industrial development, and innovation.



Offshore Wind Excellence

The region is pioneering floating offshore wind development and seeking to become a global centre of excellence making use of strong links between the Green Freeport, academia, and industry. Maximising UK supply chain content could generate **£40b** by the **mid-2030s** from **Scottish waters alone**.



Hydro Power Potential

With the UK's highest mountains, largest inland lochs, and high rainfall, Highland is ideal for hydro-electricity generation and pumped storage schemes.



Marine Energy Innovation

Located on Europe's north-western edge, the region offers world-class wave and tidal resources – perfect for developing, testing and commercialising marine energy technologies.



Energy Storage & Hydrogen

Highland is advancing energy storage solutions such as battery storage and Power-to-X, converting renewables into green hydrogen. The Green Freeport tax sites offer major opportunities for large-scale hydrogen production, **supporting the UK's 10GW target by 2030**.



Decarbonising Heat

Committed to introducing innovative low carbon heating systems across the region.



Impressive Output

In 2024, Highland generated **7,826GWh of electricity from renewable sources** – more than double that of any other Scottish local authority area – helping reduce the carbon footprint of energy-intensive industries. (source: ScotGov)

Why Invest?

- UK's top region for renewable energy generation.
- Vast untapped potential across multiple technologies.
- Strong public sector commitment to net zero.
- Skilled workforce with global project experience.

Clean Energy Lùth glan

Opportunities to invest



Coire Glas pumped hydro scheme

Description:

Proposed pumped hydro storage scheme with potential capacity of up to 1500MW. It is the first large-scale pumped storage project to be developed in the UK for more than 40 years and would more than double the UK's existing electricity storage capacity.

Investment Type:	Project Value:
Renewable energy – capital Investment.	£1.5b.
Landowner:	Size:
SSE Renewables.	500m.
Location:	Status:
Loch Lochy, Lochaber.	Ongoing.
	Timescales:
	Short term.



Earba Storage pumped storage hydro scheme

Description:

The Earba Storage project is a proposed pumped storage hydro ('PSH') scheme with an installed capacity of up to 1,800MW. The Earba project will be the largest such scheme in the UK in terms of energy stored.

Investment Type:	Project Value:
Long Duration Energy Storage (LDES) Cap & Floor.	£2.7b.
Size:	Status:
40GWh.	Ongoing.
Landowner:	Timescales:
Ardverikie Estate.	Construction 6 years, operational life 100 years+.
Location:	
Loch Earba, Newtonmore.	



Kishorn Port

Description:

With one of Europe's largest dry docks, it provides services for decommissioning, oil & gas, floating offshore wind, drilling rig life extensions and upgrades, and renewables. Facilities for the manufacture and assembly of floating offshore wind structures, with the help of its onsite quarry and concrete batching plant

Investment Type:	Project Value:
Energy – manufacturing and assembly.	£50m+.
Size:	Status:
45ha.	Ongoing.
Landowner:	Timescales:
Kishorn Port Ltd.	Immediate to long term.
Location:	
Loch Kishorn, Wester Ross.	

Clean Energy Lùth glan

Opportunities to invest



Loch na Cathrach pumped hydro scheme

Description:

Major pumped storage hydro scheme at Loch Ness with storage capacity of approximately 4,000MWh and an installed power generation capacity of 500MW.

Investment Type:
Capital.

Project Value:
To be confirmed.

Landowner:
Statkraft.

Size:
500MW.

Location:
Dores, Loch Ness.

Status:
In development.

Timescales:
Operational by early 2030s.



Pentland Firth tidal-stream array

Description:

Ampeak Energy are developing a tidal-stream array using seabed-mounted turbines that harness both flood and ebb flows to generate predictable renewable electricity.

Investment Type:
Marine tidal stream renewable generation (with CfD support).

Project Value:
£400M+.

Size:
6MW installed (Phase 1), up to ~398MW potential.

Landowner:
Leased from The Crown Estate for development.

Status:
Operational (Phase 1), further expansion planned.

Location:
Inner Sound, Pentland Firth, Highlands.

Timescales:
Construction began 2015; Phase 1 operational 2024; future phases 2027-29.



Residential – Building the Future Highlands

Còmhnaidh – Togail na Gàidhealtachd ri Teachd

A region on the rise needs homes to match its ambition.

The Highlands is undergoing transformational growth, driven by **major infrastructure, energy, and innovation projects**. This is fuelling unprecedented demand for housing – and creating a compelling opportunity for residential developers and investors.

With generous land allocations, a proactive planning environment, and strong public-private collaboration, Highland is ready to deliver the homes of the future – from urban apartments to rural communities, and from affordable housing to premium developments.

Strategic Opportunity

- **2,600 new homes needed annually** – more than double current delivery.
- **Generous land allocations** and a positive planning framework support rapid development.
- **New Local Development Plan** being developed to enable and deliver transformational growth.

Planning & Delivery Strengths

- **97% of planning applications approved** – among the highest in Scotland.
- **Top 10%** of Scottish authorities for **major application performance**.
- **Award-winning planning authority** with efficient, collaborative decision-making.

Quality of Life & Demand Drivers

- **Strong demand across all tenures** – from affordable to premium housing
- **Two-thirds** of residents live within a **5-minute walk of green or blue space**.
- The Highlands is an attractive location for **immigration, talent retention, and lifestyle-led relocation**.

Innovative Financing & Collaboration

- The region is aligned with **Scottish Government** priorities on innovative housing finance – including **public-private partnerships, infrastructure loan schemes, and guarantee models**.
- Opportunities to leverage **Housing Infrastructure Fund, Build to Rent, and Mid-Market Rent models** to unlock stalled sites and accelerate delivery.

Why Invest?

- Strong and growing demand driven by economic transformation.
- High quality of life and natural environment attract new residents.
- Proactive local authority committed to enabling development.
- Collaborative investment environment with public sector support.



Tourism

Turasachd

A Cornerstone of Highland Growth

Tourism is a cornerstone of the Highland economy, attracting over **10 million visitors annually**, generating over **£2 billion in direct spend**, and supporting **25,000 jobs**. For investors, this sector offers scale, resilience, and strong growth potential.

The Highlands' natural landscapes and heritage create strong demand for **high-quality accommodation, attractions, and active travel infrastructure**. Strategic projects such as the **£35 million Inverness Castle redevelopment**, expected to draw **500,000+ visitors per year**, highlight the region's commitment to enhancing its visitor economy.

Gaelic adds a unique dimension to this growth story. As Scotland's indigenous language, it enriches the visitor experience through authentic storytelling, cultural interpretation, and branding.

Investment opportunities span **hospitality, leisure, and visitor experiences**, supported by a proactive planning environment and strong public-sector backing. Tourism development is aligned with sustainability and placemaking principles, ensuring growth benefits communities while protecting natural assets. With global recognition of the Highlands as a destination, investors can tap into expanding markets for **eco-tourism, adventure travel, and premium visitor experiences**.

Tourism in the Highlands is growing and increasingly year-round, offering long-term returns and diversification. For those seeking to invest in a sector where demand meets authenticity, the Highlands presents a compelling proposition.



10 million
visitors annually

£2 billion
in direct spend

Data Centres – Powered by Nature

Ionadan Dàta – Le cumhachd nàdair

Scotland's green data revolution starts here.

With abundant renewable power, cool temperatures, and direct access to international fibre routes, the region offers ideal conditions for hosting the next generation of zero-carbon, hyperscale data centres.

As major operators seek stable, clean energy and natural cooling, the Highlands stands out as a cost-effective, climate-resilient and sustainable location. With strong public sector backing, the region offers a wide range of opportunities for the UK's green data revolution.

Why Invest?

- Abundant green energy and natural cooling.
- Strategic location with renewable power and global fibre connections.
- Synergies with growth industries such as space and renewables.
- Strong public sector support for digital infrastructure.



Examples of Potential Investment Opportunities:

- **MeyGen:** Tidal-powered data centre (Caithness).
- **Dounreay:** 148ha site with clean energy and subsea links.
- **Fearn Airfield:** 315ha site for data, renewables, and commercial use.



Regional Opportunities

Cothroman Roinneil

Each region of the Highlands offers unique and exciting investment opportunities, shaped by its natural assets, infrastructure, and innovation potential.

Spotlight on Caithness & Sutherland

Scotland's Northern Edge of Possibility

Long known for its dramatic coastlines and expansive landscapes, Caithness & Sutherland is now leading a quiet transformation.



[Find out more](#)

Spotlight on Inner Moray Firth

Positioned at the heart of the UK's Green Revolution

The Inner Moray Firth is the most populous and economically active part of the Highlands. Anchored by Inverness, it's a hub for life sciences, technology, and education.

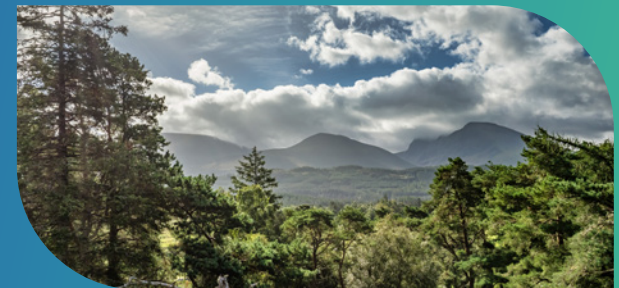


[Find out more](#)

Spotlight on West Highland

Iconic Landscapes, Industrial Strength, and Global Appeal

From Lochaber to Skye and Wester Ross, the West Highlands is one of Scotland's most iconic and economically ambitious regions.



[Find out more](#)

Spotlight on Caithness & Sutherland

Solais air adhart Gallaibh & Cataibh

Scotland's Northern Edge of Possibility

Long known for its dramatic coastlines and expansive landscapes, Caithness & Sutherland is now leading a quiet transformation. With some of the **UK's richest renewable resources**, the region is home to pioneering **wind and tidal energy projects** like the **MeyGen array** and **West of Orkney Windfarm** – generating clean energy, attracting investment, and creating skilled jobs.

A highly capable workforce, shaped by decades of experience in the nuclear sector, is now driving innovation across **energy, engineering, and emerging industries**. Public-private partnerships and new ventures like the spaceport project are helping diversify the economy and inspire future generations.

The Flow Country, recently designated a **UNESCO World Heritage Site**, places the region at the heart of global climate action. Caithness & Sutherland is where natural assets, heritage, and innovation come together to build a resilient, forward-looking economy.

- Public and private investment in **tourism, food and drink**, and **the creative industries** is capitalising on the region's position along the **North Coast 500** and its **UNESCO status**, positioning the area as a must-visit destination.
- Global firms like **Rolls-Royce** and **Subsea 7** are investing in local talent and growth.
- The **MeyGen tidal array** is expanding to **28 MW** (with a potential of **398 MW**) through a second phase, with operations **expected to begin in 2027**.
- **£250m investment** committed to peat restoration.
- Development of **Sutherland Spaceport** on the A' Mhoine peninsula will enable satellite launches into low Earth orbit up to **12 times a year**.
- SSEN Transmission is investing **£7b** this decade in new and upgraded network infrastructure across the region.
- Increasingly attractive to emerging energy technologies such as battery storage and hydrogen – with **2,000 tonnes of green hydrogen produced annually** at Gordonbush Wind Farm, Sutherland.
- **1,281 new homes** to be delivered in Caithness & Sutherland over the next 10 years.



Key Stats:

Caithness & Sutherland region approx.

8,130 km²

Coastline Length:

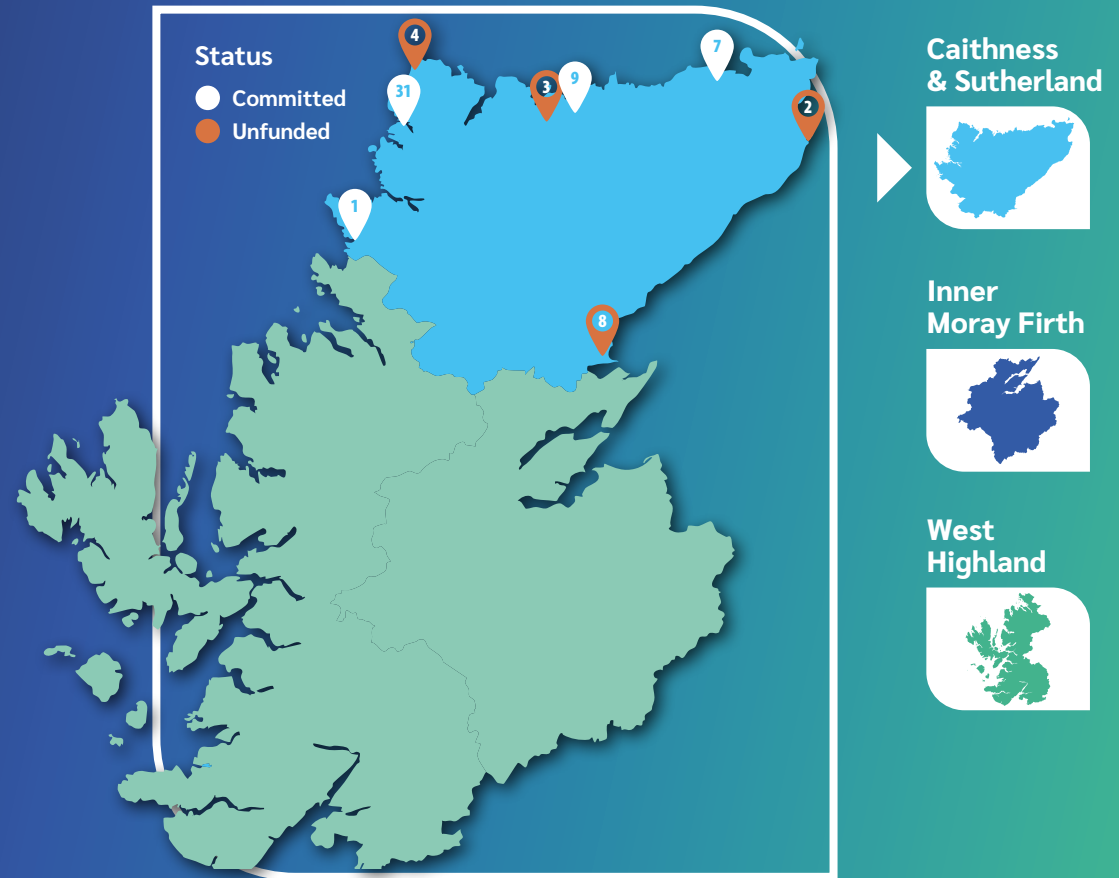
1,212 km

Spotlight on Caithness & Sutherland **Solais air adhart Gallaibh & Cataibh**

1. Lochinver Harbour
2. Wick Harbour
3. North Coast 500 - Bettyhill to Tongue
4. North Coast 500 - Cape Wrath
7. Thurso Community POD
8. Dornoch Sports Facility
9. Naver Bridge replacement
31. Kinlochbervie Harbour

The Highland Council have committed significant enabling investment:

- A **£100m Community POD** in Thurso, as part of the first phase of the Highland Investment Plan. This aims to enhance local services and communities through the establishment of Points of Delivery (PODs) to bring together various public services, such as education, health, and leisure, in a single location.
- **£6m of investment** in harbour improvements Kinlochbervie and Lochinver



Spotlight on Inner Moray Firth

Spotlight air Linne Mhoireibh a-staigh

Positioned at the heart of the UK's Green Revolution

The Inner Moray Firth is the most populous and economically active part of the Highlands. Anchored by Inverness, it's a hub for life sciences, technology, and education. It's a place of ideas and enterprise, home to a growing life sciences and technology sector, supported by **Inverness Campus** and the **University of the Highlands and Islands**. The **Green Freeport** initiative is unlocking **billions in investment**, positioning the area as a global hub for **offshore wind** and **sustainable industry**.

With strong transport links, expanding housing, and cultural investments like the **Inverness Castle Experience**, communities are thriving. The shores of **Loch Ness** continue to draw visitors from around the world, while new developments ensure that tourism supports local livelihoods and celebrates Highland heritage.

Carefully planned growth is shaping the future here, with sustainability and placemaking at the heart of development. The Inner Moray Firth is not just **the economic engine of the Highlands** – it's a place of **opportunity, creativity, and connection**.

- **Inverness & Cromarty Firth Green Freeport: £6.5b** of investment across the sites, creating **18,300 new jobs** and unlocking **520ha of prime industrial land**.
- **£35.5m invested** in a world-class tourism redevelopment of Inverness Castle, opening in late 2025.
- Growing life sciences and technology sectors supported by Inverness Campus – **2,500 people in the Highlands now work in these industries**.
- **LifeScan**, one of Scotland's largest medical technology companies, employs over **850 staff** in Inverness and supplies global markets from its Highland base.
- **18,519 new homes** to be delivered in the Inner Moray Firth region.



Key Stats:

Inner Moray Firth region approx.

5,129 km²

Coastline Length:

350 km

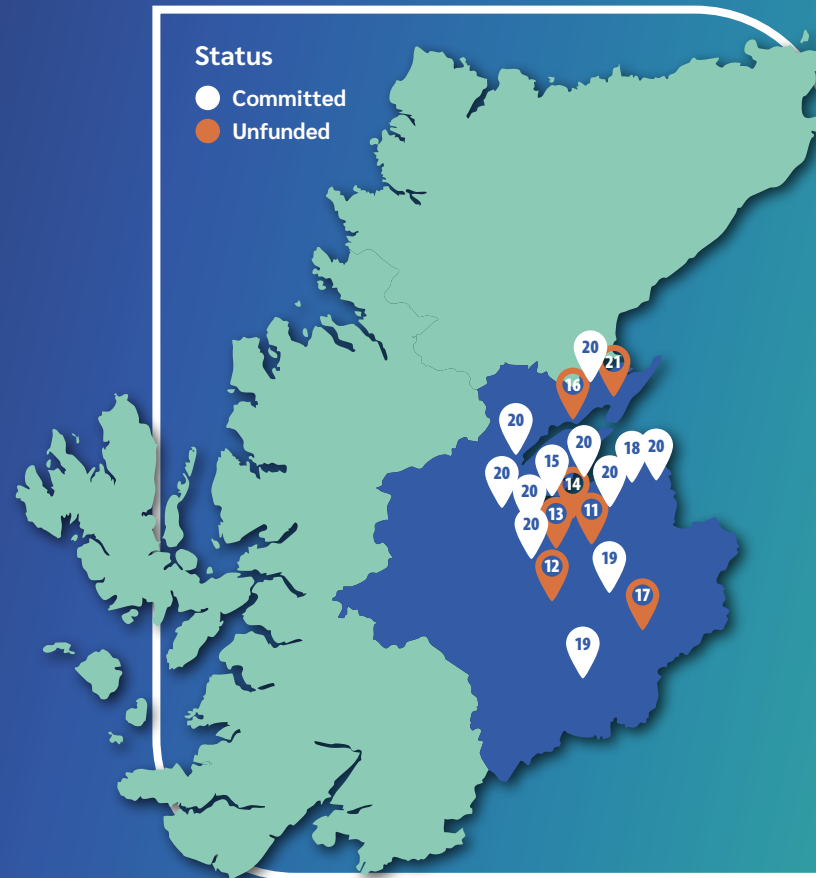
Spotlight on Inner Moray Firth

Spotlight air Linne Mhoireibh a-staigh

10. Primary Care Infrastructure
11. Raigmore Masterplan
12. Inverness Prison site redevelopment
13. Inverness Station and Bus Masterplan
14. Bridge Street Redevelopment
15. Inverness Castle and Energy Hub
16. Tomich junction improvements
17. Aviemore park and ride and transport improvements
18. A96 Upgrade
19. A9 Upgrade
20. Community PODs and Education - £300m+
21. Tain swimming pool
22. Sports and Leisure Facilities Upgrade (various)

Key enabling investments include:

- Education & Learning Estate: £33m Nairn Academy; £24m Inverness North West (Inverness High School) Community POD; £50m Dingwall Community POD; £20m Beaulieu Community POD; £24m Fortrose Community POD; £80m Inverness South West (Charleston) Community POD; £22m Tornagrain Community POD; £68m Tain 3-18 campus.
- Tourism & Culture: **£35.5m** Inverness Castle redevelopment and Energy Hub; **£8.8m** Bught Park pavilion; **£5.9m** Northern Meeting Park stadium and pavilion.



Caithness & Sutherland



Inner Moray Firth



West Highland



Spotlight on West Highland

Spotlight air taobh an iar na Gàidhealtachd

Iconic Landscapes, Industrial Strength, and Global Appeal

From Lochaber to Skye and Wester Ross, the West Highlands is one of Scotland's most iconic and economically ambitious regions. Its world-renowned scenery draws millions of visitors each year, fuelling a thriving tourism economy and attracting major investment in infrastructure and hospitality.

Beyond its natural beauty, the region is home to the **Alvance British Aluminium smelter** in Fort William – the only smelter in the UK and one of Europe's greenest industrial operations - powered by **hydroelectricity and supporting over two hundred skilled jobs**. Strategic developments like the **Coire Glas pumped storage hydro scheme** and the transformation of **Kishorn Port** into an **offshore wind hub** are unlocking new industrial capabilities and employment.

With strong leadership and partnerships and a clear focus on sustainability, the West Highlands is committed to driving growth, celebrating its culture, nurturing innovation and inspiring people to live, work, and invest in one of Scotland's most remarkable places.

- Coire Glas hydro pumped storage scheme has a potential installed capacity of up to **1,500MW** - expecting to create **500 jobs** during the **six-year construction phase**.
- The **'Skye to Fort Augustus Reinforcement Project'** is upgrading the energy transmission network- providing the infrastructure necessary to link proposed new onshore and offshore windfarms with markets in the south.
- A **£42million upgrade** to **Kishorn Port** has received **£24million** in public funding support which will prepare the site for the **manufacturing of floating offshore wind foundations**- positioning it as a strategic hub for offshore wind logistics and assembly.
- 3,245 new homes to be delivered in the West Highlands region in the next 10 years. The Council is leading on a £20m development at Blar Mhor in Fort William



Key Stats:

West Highlands region approx.

11,485 km²

Coastline Length:

2,850 km

Spotlight on West Highland

Spotlight air taobh an iar na Gàidhealtachd

5. North Coast 500 road improvements

30. Portree Harbour

32. Replacement Belford Hospital

33. Lochaber Care Project

34. Fort William Sports, Leisure and Cultural Hub

35. Fort William strategic transport improvements

36. Corran crossing fixed link

37. Corran ferry infrastructure

39. Fort William waterfront development

40. Broadford Airport

41. Community PODs

43. Portree Link Road

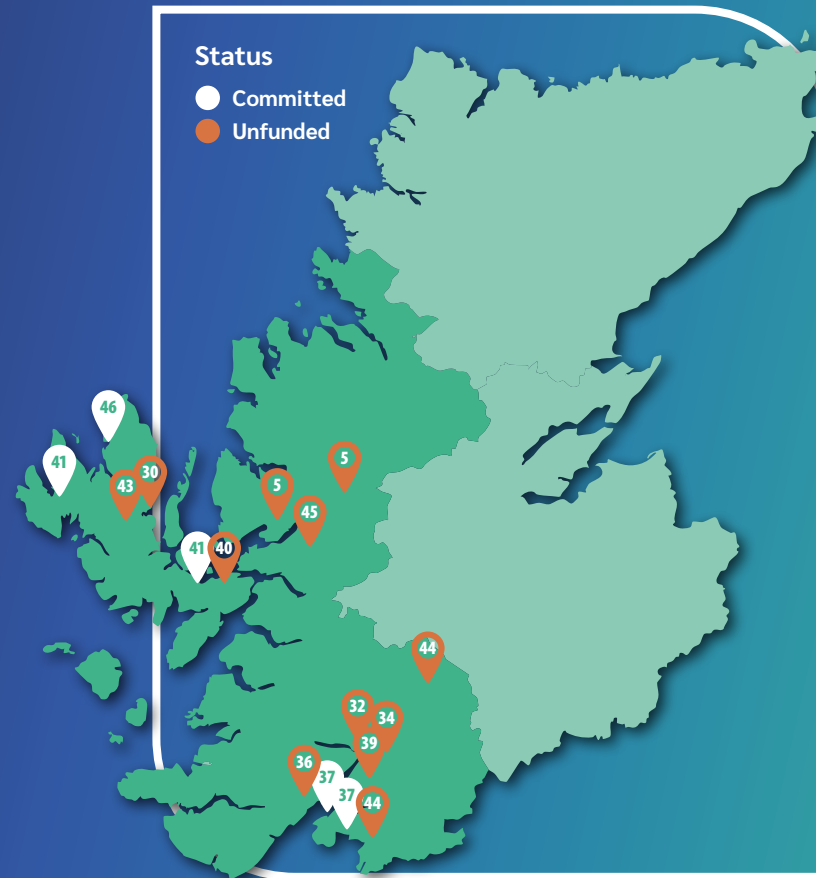
44. A82 Upgrades

45. Stromferry bypass, Lochcarron

46. Uig Harbour Upgrade

Key enabling investments by the Council include:

- Education: **£19m** Broadford POD; **£18m** Dunvegan POD; **£1m** Plockton High School (including residence).
- Transport: **£30m** Corran Ferry infrastructure upgrade and **£28m** new Corran Ferry investment; **£77m** Uig Harbour.
- Housing: **£20.2m** development at Blar Mhor in Fort William.



Caithness
& Sutherland



Inner
Moray Firth



West
Highland



Partnering for Growth: Public Sector Leadership & Investment

Com-pàirteachas airson Fàs: Ceannardas is Tasgadh san Roinn Phoblaich

The region is undergoing a bold economic transformation, underpinned by public sector leadership, long-term public sector investment and strong collaboration across governments and industry.

Strategic Alignment: Delivering National, Regional, and Local Outcomes

The Highland Council, working alongside the **UK Government**, the **Scottish Government**, regional partners, and national agencies, is delivering a coordinated strategy to unlock the region's full potential, which aligned with national ambitions for:

- **Clean energy leadership** – supporting offshore wind, hydrogen, and green port infrastructure.
- **Place-based regeneration** – investing in communities and creating high-quality jobs.
- **Inclusive growth** – ensuring opportunities reach across rural and urban areas.

The approach ensures continued support from national programmes and funding streams:

- The **Scottish National Investment Bank** and **National Wealth Fund**, supporting strategic industrial and energy investments.
- The UK & Scottish Government's **Industrial Strategy Zones Action Plan**, which prioritises regions like the Highlands, and the Green Freeport in particular, for targeted growth and innovation.
- The **£600m Strategic Sites Accelerator Fund**, which is unlocking development-ready land and overcoming infrastructure barriers in Freeports and Investment Zones.



Partnering for Growth: Our Priorities and Investment

Com-pàirteachadh airson Fàs: A' comasachadh tasgadh

The Highland Council, alongside public and private partners, is driving a major transformation programme to strengthen assets and infrastructure, supporting sustainable economic growth across the area.



Highland Investment Plan

A £2.1 billion capital programme will deliver:

- Network of new community-based multi-service facilities incorporating public sector partners and bringing together education, health, leisure and childcare with a focus on providing the services that people need within their local place.
- Transport network improvements including roads, bridges, and community transport, enhancing connectivity and access to jobs and services.



Housing Growth

The Highland Housing Challenge Partnership Action Plan identifies how public and private sector partners will deliver on the target of 24,000 new homes over 10 years, representing £3 billion investment. Actions include increasing land supply, innovative financing, and building developer capacity.



Inverness and Highland City Region Deal (2017-2027)

A cornerstone of economic development, positioning the region as a hub for digital connectivity, innovation and sustainable growth. Public and private investment now totals £428.7 million, reflecting strong commitment to long-term transformation.



Tourism Infrastructure

The Strategic Tourism Infrastructure Plan provides a framework for sustainable visitor facilities, prioritising transport, parking, and amenities at key destinations to manage pressures and enhance the visitor experience.

These initiatives, alongside other emerging programmes, represent a coordinated approach to regeneration, housing, connectivity, and tourism—ensuring Highland remains an attractive place to live, work, and invest.

Get in touch Cuir fios thugainn

The Invest Highland team is dedicated to supporting investors and businesses at every stage.

Whether you're searching for the right site or property, developing a strong business case, or looking to leverage our local insight, we're here to help champion your plans for growth, expansion, or relocation within the Highlands. Working closely with our partner agencies, we can connect you with the right people and organisations to make your ambitions a reality.

Discover more and explore opportunities, email:

invest@highland.gov.uk

or contact us on LinkedIn:

[linkedin.com/company/invest-highland](https://www.linkedin.com/company/invest-highland)



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Page 7: Global Energy Group

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Page 20: Kishorn Port Ltd

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Page 26: Global Energy Group

Invest Highland – Summary

Themes	Target Audience	Format	Projects	Funding Sources
Our Growth Sectors	External investors and businesses	Website Prospectus	Sectors Renewable Energy Space Life Science Creative Industries	External
Our Priorities	Private Equity Government Funders	Website	Highland Investment Plan Highland Housing Challenge City Region Deal Future Growth Deal Projects – physical, social, cultural	Highland Public Sector Investment UK and Scottish Government Highland-based developers and contractors External private sector investors
Our Places	Local Developers Local Communities	Website	Area Place Plan Projects BeConnected	Public Sector Funding Highland developers and contractors
Our People	Potential investors and people making Highland their home	Website	Workforce North – Skills Development	Public

My Highland Future: A Regional Skills Programme (Plan on a Page)

APPENDIX 4

The model below captures the feedback from a broad range of stakeholders at the recent Workforce North Summit. The broad agreement on these elements constitutes a call to action.

Pledges will be sought from various private and public sector organisations to build the programme.

Why	How			What
Vision for Creating Our Future Workforce	Key Systems We Will Deploy to Do So			Outputs We Will Achieve Together
The vision for the future is expressed in a number of key entitlements: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> All children and families learn about the opportunities and challenges of energy in the Highlands and how it is at the heart of the UK's future security All children and families learn about this in relation to the world of 2050 that they will live through All children experience work related learning about career options in Highland All families have access to information and activities to help inform them Adults who require it, have opportunities to reskill themselves to seize opportunities Highland can demonstrate a full employment model. 	Universal Programme What everyone can experience	Targeted Programme Additional support for individuals and groups	Intensive Programme Those most at risk or on elite pathways	We will enable change by: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Deploying partnership resources in a shared apprenticeship Gaining pledges from Highland employers to support agreed programmes and put these on our strategic map of supply side solutions Demonstrate the performance of our programme and build the confidence of future investors to relocate Align all sources of funding to the plan Building a partnership team which can demonstrate its impact (business growth, GVA, job creation) Increase the numbers of business mentors, STEM ambassadors and work experience programmes across Highland
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A major campaign to raise public awareness of the future workforce opportunities in the area and to galvanise talent attraction Learner-centred Early Years Programmes address future careers & unconscious Bias Through the BGE, family-centred activities to learn about careers and entrepreneurship (including careers fairs, STEM inputs, entrepreneur programmes, class-based learning about the future opportunities and SDS inputs) In the senior phase, all young people have access to careers coaching and mentoring, with specific careers advice and guidance. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> All young people have the chance to experience a vocational qualification as part of their senior phase All young people have the chance to experience a digital programme as part of the senior phase There will be an expanded offering of Foundation Apprenticeships and Modern Apprenticeships across the partnership (focusing on key priorities of engineering) Targeted Entrepreneur Development programmes which enable people to undertake the path to creating businesses Increase opportunities for internship – try before you buy schemes. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> School-based interventions for those at greatest risk of exclusion from the labour market Employability support for all adults not in employment or training (Employability Pathway) Bespoke vocational path for children with ASN Job academies for Care Experienced Young People Optimise DWP schemes for those with disabilities 	
The Values Shaping our Partnership	Our Processes and Resources to Support Development			Outcomes We Will Deliver Through
	Key values shape our programme: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> We are global in outlook and local in action – and are focused on creating a positive personal, family and economic future for people We are scientific and data intelligent in approach We are focused on ensuring Highland communities thrive We promote diverse communities, and we are inclusive – especially as we welcome a future workforce We promote green energy as part of a sustainable future – and look across disciplines to do so We provide hope for the future, where there is doubt about sustainability. 	There is a single team approach across all agencies to delivering the future workforce that the region needs. All partners support and align to these processes to secure our objectives.	Strategic Mapping / Data Management Ensuring we are scientific in approach	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> There is regional mapping of business workforce employment demand by area, sector and company type There is regional mapping of supply side solutions by both public and private sector partners There is systematic gathering of data to facilitate planning and coordination – based on labour market insights and regional skills assessments The workforce demand is mapped to the related challenge of providing an appropriate future housing supply to create the conditions for success. 	Partnership Coordination There is a single team approach	Alignment of Resource All partnership resources are transparently shown	We measure success by how we enable economic transformation and create a future workforce: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Growing our activity and completion rates for the Family of Apprenticeships (FA, MA, GA) Attracting talent to the area (people by sectors and skills) Retaining young people in the area Delivering key entitlements in the 'My Highland Future Programme' to (successful universal, talented & intensive programmes) Adding value to the economy (measured in GVA and average wage increases) Reducing vacancy rates for employment positions Increasing economic activity for key groups Growing the numbers of jobs to achieve our area targets.
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Across the partnership there is a single team concept (based on the rugby team structure) for matching supply to demand There is a central, coordinating team, anchored by Highland Council, but incorporating key partners to enable planning – relating to the DYW boards Sector skills boards established to enable more effective pathways for specific industry areas Secure industry pledges for aspects of the 'My Highland Future' programme' – to map industry contributions, based on what employers prioritise to solve their recruitment issues A shared apprenticeship programme to align of potential employees for future opportunities to enable 'over-supply' 'over-training'. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> All partnership resource will align to the broad 'My Highland Future' skills plan We align the Green Freeport NICs to the Powerhouse Plan, which is embedded in this 'My Highland Future Plan' approach There is local coordination of programmes There is a live date base of offerings Map delivery vehicles for skills (state, 3rd & private sector) & consider their functionality within current and future system delivery Enable infrastructure investment to build capacity (state, 3rd & private sector) Supply investment from employers to fund the future systems (procurement; levy; THC – Social Value from Renewables, etc). 	