

Agenda Item	14
Report No	LA/15/26

The Highland Council

Committee: Lochaber

Date: 26 January 2026

Report Title: Fort William 2040 Bi-Annual Update

Report By: Assistant Chief Executive - Place

1 Purpose/Executive Summary

- 1.1 This report provides an update on the progress of the Fort William 2040 (FW2040) Masterplan and Delivery Programme. This follows the previous annual update which was given to Committee in August 2025 and where it was agreed that updates would be provided twice yearly. This report provides updates on all the individual projects within the wider FW2040 vision and sets out the focus for key work to be undertaken in the coming 6 months.

2 Recommendations

- 2.1 Members are asked to:-
- i. **Note** the progress that has been made with the individual projects within the FW2040 Masterplan as summarised at Appendix 1: FW2040 Annual Masterplan Project Update December 2025;
 - ii. **Note** the successful delivery of the *Partnering for Progress* event in November 2025. This was organised in collaboration with the Lochaber Community Partnership, the Highland Council Area Place Planning team, and Voluntary Action Lochaber continuing the FW2040 commitment to ongoing community engagement. Further detail is provided in section 5 of this report; and
 - iii. **Support** identified priority FW2040 work areas for the coming year as summarised in section 6 of this report.

3 Implications

- 3.1 **Resource** - resources to cover the salary of the FW2040 Project Manager, update FW2040 online documentation and continue to promote the plan and engage with the local community are allowed for within the Service budget. Funding will be sought for individual projects where appropriate e.g., as they progress through the feasibility stage. No projects will be initiated until all funding is in place.
- 3.2 **Legal** - the FW2040 Masterplan and Delivery Programme do not form part of the Council's statutory development plan for the area and are therefore unlikely to be subject to any legal challenge. Individual FW2040 projects and developments will address legal requirements as necessary.

- 3.3 **Risk** - there are no known significant risks associated with this item.
- 3.4 **Health and Safety (risks arising from changes to plant, equipment, process, or people)** - there are no known health and safety risks associated with this item.
- 3.5 **Gaelic** - Gaelic headings will be used in any written publications relating to FW2040.

4 Impacts

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

5 Wider Programme Developments

5.1 Annual Community Engagement Event

On the 12th November *Partnering for Progress* was hosted at the Nevis Centre in Fort William. This event was organised in collaboration by Lochaber Community Partnership, Voluntary Action Lochaber, the Highland Council, and FW2040. The event brought together public agencies, organisations, community projects, and residents to strengthen capacity in Lochaber through:

- Showcasing initiatives, enterprises, projects, priorities, and plans.
- Sharing practice and funding knowledge.
- Fostering collaboration and partnership.
- Encouraging participation and community engagement.
- Promoting awareness of local resources and opportunities.
- Undertaking consultation; and
- Supporting strategic planning aligned with FW2040, Local and Area Place Plans, and regeneration efforts.

- 5.2 Whilst *Partnering for Progress* was not a dedicated FW2040 event and covered a wider range of organisations and initiatives throughout Lochaber, there was a dedicated FW2040 stall providing information on the programme with key priority 2040 projects represented with their own stalls, including: the new Hospital, the Fort William Integrated Transport Plan, Cow Hill Hall, and the West Highland Museum. It is hoped that this will become an annual event for the area, providing a focus for networking, information, support, and consultation efforts across a range of services and areas.

6 Priorities

6.1 A summary of the priorities for the coming six months for FW2040 is detailed here with more information provided in sections 6.2 - 6.4 below:-

- Managing the Fort William town centre master planning work and instigating work to further the delivery and implementation of proposals, with a current focus on culture and leisure services and facilities, and the potential relocation of the bus station;
- Continued collaboration to help progress the Integrated Transport Plan (ITP) for Fort William as a core member of the ITP Client Delivery Group;
- Collaboration with the newly established Fort William Business Improvement District (BID) to co-ordinate and progress improvements in the town centre; and
- Ongoing support and development of all projects on the FW2040 Masterplan and regular scheduled engagement with the FW2040 Board and through the two specific FW2040 groups (the Transport Sub-Group and the Community Stakeholder Group).

6.2 Culture and Leisure Options Appraisal

HubNorth have been commissioned to undertake a Culture and Leisure Service Provision review for Greater Fort William. This piece of work will evaluate the current provision of culture (e.g., arts, events, libraries, community halls) and leisure (e.g., sports, recreation, swimming) services and facilities and seek to make recommendations as to potential improvements or reconfiguration. The core venues of interest, as identified in the Fort William Town Centre Masterplan work, include Lochaber Leisure Centre, the Nevis Centre, and Fort William Library (all of which are Council-owned, but operated by others). However, the wider context of facility and service provision throughout the town will be considered within the appraisal. A project inception meeting has taken place to be followed in the new year by the establishment of a study steering group and site visits with FW2040 providing key local input and oversight.

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

Austin-Smith: Lord (ASL) have been commissioned to undertake a feasibility study looking at improvements to the current bus station and potential relocation options. The study will consider the integration of local services, coaches, and regional providers into a single hub and the opportunities for better connectivity and rationalisation of routes e.g. A82 right turn. ASL have completed a document review, undertaken a site visit and had initial discussions with some operators. They also attended *Partnering for Progress* to engage with the community about the project. Feedback received included concerns around - lack of toilets, poor weather protection, unsafe underpass access, distance from town centre, and a lack of travel information. The next steps will involve meeting with all operators, reviewing capacity and service requirements and investigating potential options. ASL will be invited to provide an update through the FW2040 Transport Sub-Group in the new year.

6.3 Fort William Integrated Transport Plan

6.3.1 Work is progressing on the Fort William Integrated Transport Plan (FW ITP), specifically:-

- Traffic surveys were completed in August (peak flows).
- Further surveys and data collection were recently completed in November to capture off-peak flows.
- The AECOM/Stantec stalls at the Lochaber *Partnering for Progress* event were well attended.
- Discussions are underway to sift a long list of options into those which will be appraised through the study (current estimate around 30 options covering road, rail, active travel, bus and water and including infrastructure and services).
- An updated traffic model will inform the appraisal of the list of options. Work on this will start in the coming months.
- Major public consultation is planned for the spring.
- There is now a project page with FAQs and historical documents available on the HITRANS website – [HERE](#). The FAQs will also be added to the FW2040 webpages.

6.4 Fort William BID

6.4.1 At the end of 2025, representatives of the Fort William Business Improvement District (BID) accepted an invitation to join the FW2040 Board. Opportunities for collaboration will be explored over the duration of the coming year.

Designation: Assistant Chief Executive - Place

Date: 18 December 2025

Author: Alison Martin - FW2040 Project Manager

Background Papers: None

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



FW2040 Annual Masterplan Project Update

December 2025

Alison Martin

FW2040 Project Manager

FW2040 Projects: Overview

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

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

Category	Current FW2040 Masterplan Projects (20)
Recently Completed.	<i>None at present</i>
Works underway on site.	2. Nevis Forest Mountain Resort - Forest Land Scotland: Eco-cabins groundworks, internal roads and foundations (Forest Holidays) 3. Active Travel Audit - Delivery of Recommendations: various improvements ongoing (THC/HITRANS)
Planning, design or preparatory work being undertaken by FW2040 Board member organisations.	4. Road Improvements STAG/STPR2 - Integrated Transport Plan (HITRANS/AECOM/Stantec) 5. Town Centre Waterfront Enhancement (split between 8. and 11.) 6. New Hospital and Adult Care Provision (NHS Highland/THC)
Planning, design or preparatory work being undertaken by organisations external to the FW2040 Board.	7. Upper Achintore Community Facility - Cow Hill Hall (Upper Achintore Regeneration Group) 8. Cruise Ship Reception Facilities (Fort William Marina and Shoreline Community Interest Company) 9. Smelter Site Expansion (Alvance) 10. West Highland Museum Expansion (West Highland Museum Trust)
Requires next steps / feasibility review / funding applications.	11. Town Centre Revitalisation - Masterplan Delivery and Implementation (Various) 12. Blar Mor - Land Reserved for Community Use (THC) 13. Indoor Multi-Purpose Facility: Nevis Centre/Leisure Centre (THC Linked to 11.) 14. Helicopter Landing Site (Various) 1. Blar Mor Final Phase Housing – c. 59 units
Paused / ongoing monitoring.	15. Upper Achintore Housing - c. 270 Units. 16. STEM Centre (UHI NW+H) 17. Local Energy Network (Various) 18. High School Expansion - Extension to Lochaber High School Facilities (THC) 19. Primary Schools - Extension to Fort William Primary Schools' Capacities (THC) 20. Nevis Forest Mountain Resort - Nevis Range (Nevis Range)

FW2040 Master Plan Project Tracker		
All Masterplan Listed Projects to Date (35 peak total)	13 Completed (plus 3 Phased Developments) 3 Removed (post 2019)	Current 20 Projects on Masterplan @ January 2025 (2 added and in development post 2019)
Caol & Lochyside Flood Protection Scheme	Caol & Lochyside Flood Protection Scheme	
Nevis Forest Mountain Resort - Visitor Accommodation Nevis Range	Nevis Range Visitor Accommodation (Hotel)	
Town Centre Revitalisation - Cinema	Town Centre Revitalisation - Cinema	
Town Centre Revitalisation - Whisky Centre	Town Centre Revitalisation - Whisky Centre Housing	
Improved Internet Connection Speeds	Improved Internet Connection Speeds	
Soldiers Bridge upgrade	Soldiers Bridge upgrade	
Black Parks Active Travel Route	Black Parks Active Travel Route	
Thomas Telford Corpach Marina	Thomas Telford Corpach Marina	
Bike Carriage By Rail	Bike Carriage By Rail	
Blar Mor Housing - c. 250 units	Blar Mor Phase 1 and 2 Housing - 117 units + 63 units	Blar Mor Final Phase Housing - c. 59 units
Upper Achintore Housing - c. 350 units	Upper Achintore Phase 1 Housing - 82 Units	Upper Achintore Housing - c. 270 units
STEM Centre		STEM Centre
New Hospital		New Hospital
Blar Mor - Land Reserved for Community Use		Blar Mor - Land Reserved for Community Use
Local Energy Networks		Local Energy Network
Town Centre Revitalisation - Redevelopment of Belford Site	Town Centre Revitalisation - Masterplan and Engagement	Town Centre Revitalisation - Masterplan Delivery and Implementation
Town Centre Waterfront - access, shoreline development and promenade		Town Centre Waterfront Enhancement
High School Expansion - Extension to Lochaber High School facilities		High School Expansion - Extension to Lochaber High School facilities
Smelter Site Expansion		Smelter Site Expansion
Upper Achintore Community Facility		Upper Achintore Community Facility
Primary Schools - extension to Fort William Primary Schools' capacities	Primary Schools - 2 classroom extension to Gaelic primary	Primary Schools - extension to Fort William Primary Schools' capacities
Indoor Multi Purpose Facility (Nevis Centre)		Indoor Multi Purpose Facility (Nevis Centre)
Cruise Ship Reception Facilities		Cruise Ship Reception Facilities
Nevis Forest Mountain Resort - Forest and Land Scotland		Nevis Forest Mountain Resort - Forest and Land Scotland
Nevis Forest Mountain Resort - Nevis Range		Nevis Forest Mountain Resort - Nevis Range
Fort William Active Travel Audit		Fort William Active Travel Audit - delivery of recommendations
Road Improvements STAG/ STPR2		Road Improvements STAG/STPR2 - Integrated Management Plan (ITP)
Helicopter Landing Site		Helicopter Landing Site
West Highland Museum Expansion		West Highland Museum Expansion
Former Secondary School Site (completed 2018 but subsequently included under FW2040)	Former Secondary School Site (completed 2018 but subsequently counted as a FW2040 achievement)	
Tweeddale and Lochaber House developments	Tweeddale and Lochaber House developments	
E-Bike scheme	E-Bike scheme	
Tailrace - Kayak Competition and Training Facility	Tailrace - Kayak Competition and Training Facility	
Corpach Port Expansion	Canal Related Tourism Projects	
Canal Related Tourism Projects	Corpach Port Expansion	
	KEY	
	Added post 2019	
	Projects Delivered	
	Initial phases delivered of Current Projects	
	Current Projects	
	Removed projects (but could be reincorporated)	



Active Projects Making Fort William A Great Place to Live

STEM Centre				
Date	Progress Reported	By Whom	Next Steps	Further Information
Dec 2025	The Full Business Case for a STEM centre located at Blar Mhor was approved by the Scottish Funding Council in 2018, subject to funding availability. Since that time, the opportunity to purchase and redevelop 2.5ha of land and buildings adjacent to the Fort William campus (land and buildings largely comprising the old Underwater Centre) has arisen. This has allowed a refresh of the STEM centre options appraisal. An Outline Business Case has been made for this campus development which would provide space for STEM, digital and construction training, and a 27-bed residence building thus capitalising and expanding on the success of courses and training already delivered whilst providing a physical link to assets such as the Advancing Manufacturing Centre and the loch. UHI NWH is actively seeking funding partners for this project whilst retaining the longer-term goal of securing funding for the full STEM Centre on the Blar Mhor site.	Dave Campbell, Project Director for STEM	UHI NW+H to progress with ongoing updates to the FW2040 Project Manager for update to FW2040 Board.	To be provided as proposals develop.
New Hospital				
Date	Progress Reported	By Whom	Next Steps	Further Information
Dec 2025	In 2025 Government funding was allocated to restart the hospital project and bring it to Full Business Case (RIBA Stage 4). Work on the design has been progressing throughout the year. The NHS are aiming for outline business case submission to the Scottish Government by May 2026, full business case	Karen-Anne Wilson, Lochaber District Manager and	NHS to progress with ongoing updates to the FW2040 Project Manager for update to FW2040 Board.	Service model for new hospital NHS Highland

	<p>submission by July 2027, construction to begin in October 2027 with an estimated operational date in the final quarter of 2030. A Section 42 application was also recently submitted to planning (August 2025). This amends the masterplan to combine the hospital and STEM centre sites, allowing a campus approach to the developments to be adopted as they progress e.g. around shared access. This application also reflects an increase in the hospital footprint which detailed design has now established is required (previous size figures were based on 2015 estimates). The total project cost outlined in the Initial Agreement is £137.7 million, however cost and timescales will be subject to review as part of the restarted programme of works. In parallel an NHS redesign of health and social care is ongoing. This process includes the project for replacing the Belford Hospital but is also looking at wider service change throughout Lochaber.</p>	<p>Emma Oates Belford Hospital Manager</p>		
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Second phase housing - est. 120 Housing Units, Blar Mhor (Stage 1 - 63 units)

Date	Progress Reported	By Whom	Next Steps	Further Information
Dec 2025	<p>Phase 2 of housing on the Blar is under development. Work is ongoing to link this phase with the existing medical centre, the recently completed Phase 1 housing, and the future new hospital. A preferred bus route has been made a condition of planning which provides a one-way link from the LHS T-junction to the roundabout. The mixed tenure homes in Phase 2 are due to be developed in three stages linked to the wider Blar development plans. Construction of the first of those stages is now complete resulting in the delivery of 63 homes. The residual stages will be developed in parallel with the hospital design and delivery programme (allowing incorporation of aspects such as key worker housing). Stage 2 and 3 will see 59 units projected for development (30 units in 2030/31 and 29 units in 2031/32).</p>	<p>Helen Cameron, Housing Development Manager</p>	<p>HC to progress with ongoing updates to the FW2040 Project Manager for update to FW2040 Board.</p>	

Land reserved for community use on Blar Mhor development

Date	Progress Reported	By Whom	Next Steps	Further Information
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Dec 2025	Approximately 2ha of the land owned by the Council at Blar Mhor is designated for Community Use within the approved Masterplan. The area has been prepared for development in terms of a building platform and is accessible from the existing road network - uses to be determined.	Allan Maguire - Head of Development & Regeneration	HC to progress with ongoing updates to the FW2040 Project Manager for update to FW2040 Board.	To be provided as proposals for use develop.
Local Energy Networks				
Date	Progress Reported	By Whom	Next Steps	Further Information
Dec 2025	Stage 1 assessment at Blar Mhor examined whether there could be sufficient demand and the number of end users who would use heat from any potential network. Plans to progress this to Stage 2 and assess the technical detail of potential heat generation/to demand have been put on hold reflecting varying progress in the component projects on the Blar. Specifically, developments with the STEM Centre (an original key driver for the LEN) and the decision to use air source heat pumps for the housing developments have changed the demand profile. It is considered likely that any further LEN investigations would need to be driven by an end user such as the NHS (in parallel to the development of the hospital) if considered appropriate.	Scott Dingwall, HIE	FW2040 Project Manager to keep a watching brief in collaboration with HIE on any future LEN developments.	To be provided as and when any proposals develop.
Town Centre Revitalisation - Masterplan Delivery and Implementation (includes re-development of Belford Site)				
Dec 2025	<p>The following Fort William Town Centre Masterplan elements are being progressed as FW2040 priorities:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The reconfiguration and delivery of new culture and leisure facilities. • The 're-imagining' of Fort William Bus Station. <p>In addition, the following elements of the Masterplan are reviewed regularly, and should it be possible to progress at some point in the next year this will be undertaken:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Rail Station development co-ordinated with the Bus Station to provide a new travel interchange for the town. • Development of the current Belford and former St Mary's school sites for residential/mixed use. 	FW2040 Project Manager	FW2040 Project Manager to progress in collaboration with HC colleagues and partner organisations and provide updates to FW2040 Board.	Fort William Town Centre Masterplan Masterplan Appendices Community Feedback Design Team Response

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Leasing of the former Council service point for art, youth and/or co-working space. Public realm improvements. 			
Town Centre Waterfront - Enhancement of marine access, shoreline development and promenade				
Date	Progress Reported	By Whom	Next Steps	Further Information
Dec 2025	Waterfront improvements/proposed developments have been incorporated in the Town Centre Master-planning process detailed above. Specific plans developed by the Fort William Marina and Shoreline Community Interest Company (FWMSCIC) are detailed as a separate item below. The plans are currently illustrative but complementary.	FW2040 Project Manager	To maintain links between potential waterfront developments e.g., at the West End or Town Pier and the work on the Town Centre Masterplan.	To be provided as proposals develop.
High School Expansion - Extension to Lochaber High School facilities				
Date	Progress reported	By Whom	Next Steps	Further Information
Dec 2025	No work currently scheduled. Capacity is monitored annually as part of school roll forecasts.	HC Estates	HC to progress with ongoing updates to the FW2040 Project Manager for update to FW2040 Board.	To be provided as proposals develop.
Smelter Site Expansion				
Date	Progress Reported	By Whom	Next Steps	Further Information
June 2025	Plans for a new recycling facility and aluminium billet plant at Fort William smelter are in development by Alvance Aluminium Group. Full planning permission was approved in September 2021. Work is currently underway on the detailed design of the plant and the refinement of its business case with the project awaiting final funding approval. A dedicated project team are working on site and continue to meet milestones for the project. It is anticipated that the development will lead to the creation of up to 45 direct jobs.	James Tangney, Lead Engineer	Alvance to progress with ongoing updates to the FW2040 Project Manager for update to FW2040 Board.	The Future ALVANCE British Aluminium
Housing Units - Lundavra/ Upper Achintore- circa 350 Units				

Date	Progress Reported	By Whom	Next Steps	Further Information
June 2025	The first phase of the LINK housing project for Upper Achintore is now complete and has successfully delivered 82 affordable homes (Nov 24). This project aims to deliver up to 350 new homes in the Lundavra/upper Achintore area of town. Originally a second phase was expected to follow however funding has not yet been agreed due to a combination of development costs and funding availability and currently further phases are on hold.	Helen Cameron, Housing Development Manager	HC to progress with ongoing updates to the FW2040 Project Manager for update to FW2040 Board.	The JR Group Delivers Transformative Rural Housing Project for Upper Achintore in Fort William - The JR Group

Upper Achintore Community Facility

Date	Progress Reported	By Whom	Next Steps	Further Information
Dec 2025	The campaign to raise awareness and build capacity within the community and to identify and support community members to drive the development forwards has been successful and nine people have agreed to be Trustees of a new group going forward with the project. A constitution is nearly complete and will be agreed on the 22nd January, allowing the group to set up as a new, incorporated charity and register with the Office of the Scottish Charity Regulator (OSCR). A successful Scottish Land Fund stage 1 award has enabled the business plan to be updated which incorporates all upper Fort William (not just upper Achintore). UARG and the "Trustee" group will be working with SKS Scotland to deliver the business plan by end March 26 at which point the hope is to progress to Scottish Land Fund Stage 2 to buy the land and build a Community hub for the area.	Mark Linfield, Chair Upper Achintore Community Regeneration Group (UARG) and Lyn Kirkpatrick, Voluntary Action Lochaber	UARG to progress with ongoing updates to the FW2040 Project Manager for update to FW2040 Board. Once a new group is identified and established the project needs taken forward to finalise the business case and identify capital funding.	Cow Hill Hall Get Involved — Cow Hill Hall

Primary Schools - Extension to Fort William Primary Schools' Capacities

Date	Progress Reported	By Whom	Next Steps	Further Information
Dec 2025	No work is currently scheduled. Capacity is monitored annually as part of school roll forecasts.	HC Estates	HC to progress with ongoing updates to the FW2040 Project Manager for update to FW2040 Board.	

Indoor Multi-Purpose Facility (Nevis Centre / Leisure Centre)				
Date	Progress Reported	By Whom	Next Steps	Further Information
Dec 2025	HubNorth have been commissioned to undertake a Culture and Leisure Service Provision review for Greater Fort William. This piece of work will evaluate the current provision of culture (e.g., arts, events, libraries, community halls) and leisure (e.g., sports, recreation, swimming) services and facilities and seek to make recommendations as to potential improvements or reconfiguration. The core venues of interest, as identified in the Fort William Town Centre Masterplan work, include Lochaber Leisure Centre, the Nevis Centre, and Fort William Library (all of which are Council-owned, but operated by others). However, the wider context of facility and service provision throughout the town will be considered within the appraisal.	Fraser Innes, HubNorth and FW2040 Project Manager	A project inception meeting has taken place to be followed in the new year by the establishment of a study steering group and site visits. FW2040 to provide key local input and oversight and update the FW2040 Board.	To be provided as proposals develop
West Highland Museum - Expansion and Renovation				
Date	Progress Reported	By Whom	Next Steps	Further Information
June 2025	<p>The West Highland Museum (WHM) project proposals include renovating and expanding the museum into adjacent land and premises already owned. The project will create a modern fit-for-purpose visitor attraction and valuable historic and cultural resource allowing:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improved display of artefacts currently in storage • Provide more opportunities for education, exhibition, art, study and historic research. • Expand the retail offering. • Ensure an efficient museum building which is accessible. • Provide an improved facility for local communities and visitors alike. <p>A bid to the National Lottery Heritage Fund in Nov 2024 for the detailed design and capital build was unfortunately unsuccessful. The Trustees are however continuing with the project and looking at how elements can be phased. To this</p>	West Highland Museum Trustees	WHM Trustees to progress with ongoing updates to the FW2040 Project Manager for update to FW2040 Board	Expansion plans at the West Highland Museum

	end, planning permission is currently being sought to partially demolish an old dairy building behind the museum so the extension can be built. Trustees hope to secure £4.5M of funding for the redevelopment project.			
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Active Projects Making Fort William A Place Facing Water

Cruise Ship Reception Facilities - Ongoing Monitoring				
Date	Progress Reported	By Whom	Next Steps	Further Information
May 2025	Pontoons installed and extended by FWMSCIC to enable cruise ships to come to Fort William - have been operational since 2023. FWMSCIC have provided sheltering facilities in the West End Car Park and have been successful in securing a 5-year lease to provide a toilet, shower and office block which have recently been installed. FWMSCIC are now looking to expand the Fort William pontoons significantly to allow short stay berths for yachts, cruisers and a seaplane. They are looking for comments on a range of suggestions, including creating a visitor centre, installing a breakwater to protect the marina and developing a promenade along the waterfront.	Sarah Kennedy, FWMSCIC	FW2040 Project Manager to ensure links with the wider Town Centre Masterplan work (see the separate Masterplan item above) for update to the Board.	Fort William Marina & Shoreline Company Limited - Future Plans

Active Projects Making Fort William A Connected Place

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

Date	Progress Reported	By Whom	Next Steps	Further Information
Dec 2025	<p>Active Travel improvements continue to be undertaken in line with the Active Travel Masterplan for the town which was refreshed in 2019. Current works include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Improvements to pedestrian and cycle access in Caol where Glen Loy Street and Torlundy Road meet Kilmallie Road, scheduled for February 2026. Footpath upgrades scheduled for Upper Achintore, between Angus Crescent and Aspen Wind, planned for January - March 2026. <p>Funding was successful for four bus infrastructure projects in Fort William:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Blar Mhor and Upper Achintore bus gates links are progressing to planning, aiming for submission in Dec and Jan respectively. A82 right turn junction design work has been awarded to AECOM so this can be co-ordinated with the ITP work (see below under STAG/STPR2). Bus station redesign at an early stage led by consultants Austin-Smith:Lord. 	<p>Julie Cromarty, Team Leader Sustainable Transport</p> <p>and</p> <p>Vikki Trelfer- HITRANS</p>	<p>HC and HITRANS to progress with ongoing updates to the FW2040 Project Manager for update to FW2040 Board.</p>	Fort William Active Travel Masterplan Refresh (2019)
Road Improvements: STAG/STPR2				
Date	Progress Reported	By Whom	Next Steps	Further Information
Dec 2025	<p>In June 2025, as per the recommendation in STPR2, an Integrated Transport Plan (ITP) was commissioned for Fort William to look at solutions to address challenges with the transport network. To date, the work being carried out by AECOM/Stantec has covered:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> A refresh and revalidation of previous studies, transport problems, study transport objectives, and a review of options being considered for appraisal. Data review and data collection including calibration of the transport model. 	<p>Neil MacRae, Partnerships Manager, HITRANS</p> <p>and</p> <p>FW2040 Project Manager</p>	<p>Updates on the ITP to be provided as a separate item at Board meetings while the work is ongoing.</p> <p>Updates to be provided by HITRANS to FW2040 Board.</p>	Fort William Integrated Transport Plan

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Initial stakeholder consultation and community engagement. <p>In collaboration with the Client Delivery Group (HITRANS, Transport Scotland, Highland Council including FW2040, and Highlands and Islands Enterprise), AECOM/Stantec are now developing a proposed list of options to be appraised as part of the ITP. Options being considered look at road, rail, bus, active travel, and water and these will be appraised against the objectives of the study which include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Reducing travel time delay and variability Improving the resilience of the network Increasing modal shift and integration Reducing severance Supporting sustainable economic growth <p>All this work will feed into a programme of extensive community engagement and consultation which will be undertaken in 2026.</p>			
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Helicopter Landing Site – Fort William

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



Completed Projects Making Fort William A Great Place to Live

First Phase and Second Phase Stage 1 Housing - 117 + 63 Housing Units Blar Mhor			
Date	Summary	Next Steps	Further Information
Dec 2025	<p>Phase 1 of housing on the Blar is complete with 117 homes delivered.</p> <p>Phase 2 stage 1 of housing is also now complete with 63 homes delivered.</p>	<p>Phase 1 project complete - no further reporting envisaged.</p> <p>Phase 2 further stages are a separate item (see Active Projects).</p>	
Town Centre Revitalisation – Master-planning and Engagement			
Date	Summary	Next Steps	Further Information
Jan 2025	<p>The production of a Fort William Town Centre Masterplan and associated community engagement were completed over a period of several months in 2023/24. A <i>Design Team Response to Community Feedback</i> received on the Masterplan was published in January 2025. Building on this work the following Masterplan elements are being considered for progression:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The reconfiguration and delivery of new culture and leisure facilities • Development of the current Belford and former St Mary's school sites for residential/mixed use • Leasing of the former Council service point for art, youth and/or co-working space • A new travel interchange at the Bus and Rail Station • Public realm improvements. 	<p>Project complete - no further reporting envisaged.</p> <p>Implementation and delivery of the Masterplan including prioritisation of proposals is ongoing (see Active Projects).</p>	<p>Fort William Town Centre Masterplan</p> <p>Masterplan Appendices</p> <p>Community Feedback</p> <p>Design Team Response</p>
First Phase House - 82 Housing Units Lundavra/Upper Achintore			
Date	Summary	Next Steps	Further Information

Nov 2024	The first phase of the LINK housing project for Upper Achintore is now complete and has successfully delivered 82 affordable homes. Further phases and a programme of works for more housing are yet to be agreed.	Project complete - no further reporting envisaged. Future phases of Housing are a separate item (see Active Projects)	Landmark Housing Project Complete In Fort William Scotland Construction News
Primary Schools - 2 classroom extension to Gaelic primary			
Date	Summary	Next Steps	Further Information
Sept 2024	In May 2023 there was a confirmed expansion for the Gaelic primary school, Bun-Sgoil Ghaidhlig Loch Abar to cope with an increasing school role. Construction of an extension took place in the summer of 2024, and the school took possession of two new classrooms on 16th Sept 2024.	Project complete - no further reporting envisaged. Future primary school projects are a separate item (see Active Projects).	
Caol & Lochyside Flood Protection Scheme			
Date	Summary	Next Steps	Further Information
Dec 2023	Flood protection works are complete and official scheme opening took place on 31 st August 2023. Some limited remedial works are being completed this year.	Project complete - no further reporting envisaged.	Caol and Lochyside flood protection scheme Flood alleviation schemes The Highland Council
Nevis Forest Mountain Resort - Additional Visitor Accommodation (Hotel and Campervan Facilities)			
Completed	Summary	Next Steps	Further Information
Apr 2023	Development of a hotel with 24 bedrooms, bar and restaurant, bike shop, gift shop and covered courtyard with an event space completed. A 15-pitch campervan park with electrical hook up connections and waste disposal facilities also completed with facilities opened in April 2023.	Monitor position with regard to Forest Holidays log cabin development which is a separate item (see Active Projects).	Developing for the future at Nevis Range! - Nevis Range Nevis Range Campervan Park in Fort William, Highlands - book online now (campsites.co.uk)
Town Centre Revitalisation - Tweeddale House & Lochaber House Re-development			
Completed	Summary	Next Steps	Further Information
Oct 2022	Tweeddale House and Lochaber House re-developments creating 37 new town centre flats in total, completed in October 2022.	Project complete - no further reporting envisaged.	https://www.highland.gov.uk/news/article/10349/tweeddale_tenants_revitalise_fort_william_town_centre
Improved Internet Connection Speeds			
Completed	Summary	Next Steps	Further Information

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



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

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

Completed Projects Making Fort William A Connected Place

Bike Carriage by Rail - local use of rail coaches that can accommodate bikes

Date	Progress Reported	Next Steps	Further Information
May 2023	ScotRail ran the first of its Highland Explorer carriages, with 20 cycle spaces (a UK first), on the Mallaig branch of the West Highland Line on the 19 April 2023. The class 153 carriages operate on two services each day - the early morning service from Mallaig to Glasgow Queen Street and the evening Glasgow Queen Street to Mallaig. Northbound services run Mon-Fri while south bound run Tue-Sat. The carriages mean customers benefit from 15% more seats, more luggage space and access to an additional toilet on board. The carriages also feature table maps detailing the route, with recommendations on where to walk, cycle and visit. Scotrail have also removed the additional charge for its Highland Explorer ticket. Customers can now purchase a Highland Explorer ticket for the price of a standard class fare. For the UCI Cycling Championships there were an additional three return trips put on using class 153 carriages.	Project complete - no further reporting envisaged.	ScotRail Highland Explorer ScotRail

Black Parks Improved Active Travel Connection

Date	Progress Reported	Next Steps	Further Information
Oct 2022	Improvement works complete across the Black Parks, including surfacing and drainage improvements, turning areas, footpath work to rear of Ben Nevis Hotel, traffic bollards, street lighting, signage.	Improvements to the connections at either end of the Black Parks route - through Inverlochy from Railway Station and onward through Caol (this will be addressed by the flood defence works).	HiBike (hi-bike.co.uk) HITRANS - Highlands and Islands Transport Partnership Spaces for People: Making essential travel and exercise safer during Covid -19 The Highland Council

Active Travel - Hi Bikes

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