The Highland Council

Agenda Item	**15**
Report No	**ECI/48/26**

Committee: **Economy and Infrastructure**

Date: **12 November 2026**

Report Title: **Road Structures Annual Report 2026**

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

1 Purpose/Executive Summary

1.1 This report provides an outline of the Council's road bridge stock, its condition, the bridge inspection regime, and the works associated with maintaining road structures.

It provides recommendations and updates on projects to be included in the ‘Major Bridges' line and the ’Bridges, Retaining Walls and Culverts’ line of the Roads and Infrastructure Capital Programme.

2 Recommendations

2.1 Members are asked to:-

i. **Note** the current position in Highland in relation to the number of structures inspections undertaken as in section 6.2;

ii. **Note** the position of the Bridge Stock Condition Indicators in Highland as in section 7; and

iii. **Note** the risks that are carried by the Council in relation to its road structures as in section 3.3

3 Implications

3.1 **Resource** – Funding for bridges comes from the Council's Highland Investment Plan. The latest agreed five-year programme for 2026/27 to 2030/31 includes an allocation of **£9.602m** for bridges. In addition, the allocation for roads includes **£741k** in 2026/27 for bridges.

Not all desirable projects can currently be afforded within the capital allocation. A prioritised list of schemes is given within Appendices 1 and 2 together with an indication of which projects are currently affordable. Due to the prioritisation that has to take place against this funding backdrop, some structures are placed in managed decline as defined in CS470 of the Design Manual for Roads and Bridges. Further information on managed decline is given in paragraph 9.7 of this report.

3.2 **Legal** – The Council is required as a local roads authority under the Roads (Scotland) Act 1984 to manage and maintain all public roads in its area including structures (bridges, culverts, retaining walls etc.).

3.3 **Risk** – The Council currently carries risks in relation its road structures stock. The aim of this section is to elaborate on these risks.

Listed below are the main categories of risk carried by the Council in relation to its structures stock. Due to the lack of resources needed to gather data and quantify the risks, the present report is limited to a qualitative treatment of those risks.

The main categories of risk that exist in the Council's structures stock are:-

- **Confirmed sub-standard structures without mitigation**
  These are structures that have been confirmed, either by structural assessment or by virtue of an obvious defect, as being unable to carry full traffic loading whilst maintaining the requisite factor of safety. If no mitigation, such as a weight restriction, is imposed then the structure is considered to be operating with a sub-standard factor of safety.

- **Provisionally sub-standard structures**
  These are structures where it is suspected that if a structural assessment were carried out, they would be deemed sub-standard. The nature of the risk is the same as for confirmed sub-standard structures, described above.

- **Emerging liabilities**
  This category of risk covers structures that are likely to need significant refurbishment work or replacement before the forecast funding allows us to address them. The risks associated with these structures are of future deterioration leading to weight restrictions, closure or collapse. Some of the schemes described in **Appendix 3** are unfunded and thus fall into this category of risk.

- **Structures with sub-standard parapets**
  This category of risk is for structures where the parapets are sub-standard. The risks associated with sub-standard parapets include increased potential for vehicle incursion and injury or fatality to occupants.

- **Structures susceptible to scour**
  This category of risk is for structures with increased potential of collapse due to undermining of the foundations.

3.4 **Health and Safety (risks arising from changes to plant, equipment, process, or people)** – Risk is discussed in section 3.3 above.

3.5 **Gaelic** - No known Gaelic implications arise as a direct result of this report.

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 Highland Council Road Structures Information

5.1 This report relates only to road structures (bridges, culverts and retaining walls) that are part of the public road network maintained by the Council. This includes cattle grids and some footbridges remote from roads.

The following categories of structure are not covered by this report:-

- Pipes and small culverts, which are too small to class as a structure.
- Structures maintained by parts of the Council other than the roads service.
- Structures on Council roads, but which other authorities are responsible for.
- Trunk road structures.

5.2 The table below shows the numbers and types of road structures the Council is responsible for:-

Structure Type	Quantity
Road Bridges	1743
Footbridges	36
Unusual Structures	103
Retaining Walls	1080
Culverts	454
Cattle Grids	593
Total	**4009**

(Note: the majority of 'Unusual Structures' are listed bridges, with three being post tensioned bridges.)

6 Inspections

6.1 **Inspection procedure** - Road structures are subject to routine inspection in accordance with the Council's Structures Inspection Policy.

6.2 **Principal and general inspections** – The following table summarises the progress on the inspection of bridges, culverts and retaining walls for the current year, 2026/27:-

Routine Inspections of Bridges, Culverts and Retaining Walls (≥ 3m span for bridges and culverts or ≥ 5m height for retaining walls)			
Scheduled Inspections	**Due in 2025/26**	**Inspected (at 08/10/2026)**	**% Inspected (at 08/10/2026)**
PI	146	85	58.2%
GI	412	364	88.3%
Totals (PI + GI)	**558**	**449**	**80.4%**

GI = General Inspection (a visual inspection).
PI = Principal Inspection (a more detailed inspection).

Progress on GIs is good for the time of year. Progress on PIs is slightly behind target for the time of year due to resource limitations.

6.3 **Minor structures** – For minor structures (bridges and culverts <3m span and retaining walls <5m high) a less intensive inspection regime is employed, comprising occasional inventory update and defect check. Due to shortage of resource in previous years there is a backlog of these inspections on minor structures. The following table summarises this progress:-

Inspections of Bridges, Culverts and Retaining Walls (< 3m span for bridges and culverts or <5m height for retaining walls)			
Scheduled Inspections	**Backlog of inspections**	**Inspected (at 08/10/2026)**	**% Inspected (at 08/10/2026)**
Basic safety inspections	1095	259	23.6%

6.4 **Special inspections** – In addition to the routine inspection programme, special inspections are occasionally required in response to incidents or concerns raised. The number of such inspections is not currently recorded.

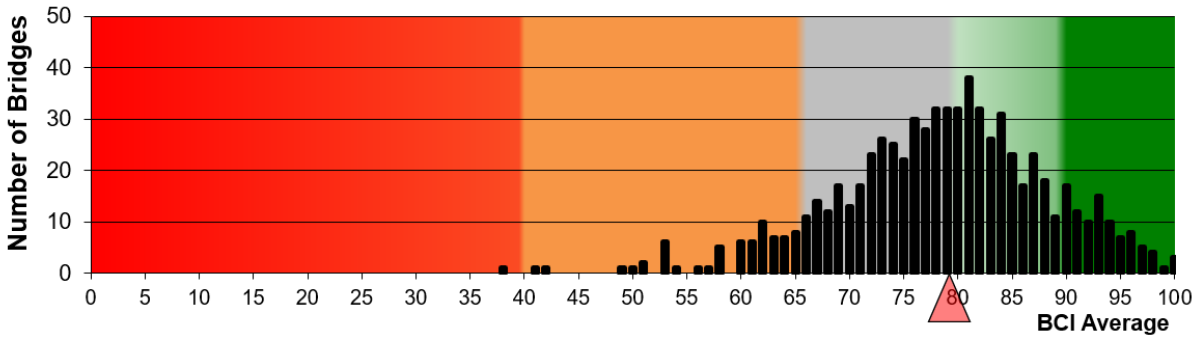
7 Bridge Stock Condition

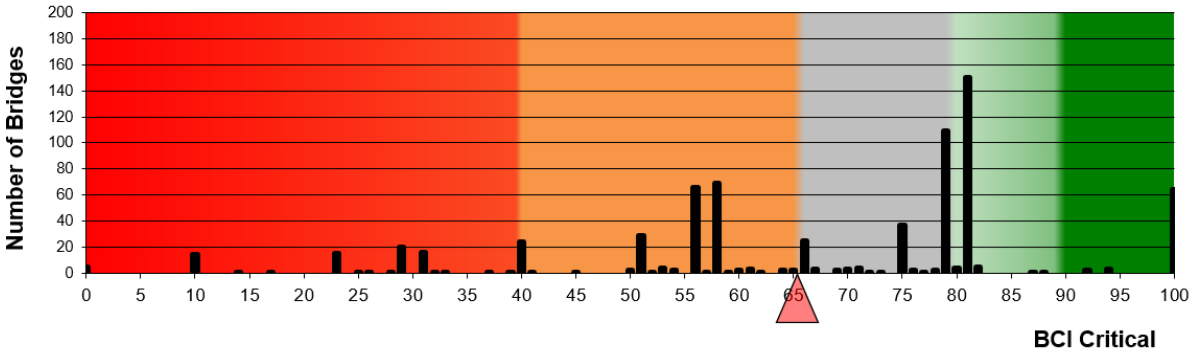
7.1 A routine principal or general inspection generates condition scores for each element of the bridge. From these scores, two Bridge Condition Indices (BCI) are calculated for each bridge; average ('BCI avg') and critical ('BCI crit'):-

- 'BCI avg' score is based on the average condition of the whole bridge; and
- 'BCI crit' score is based on the worst condition of the main structural elements.

The average of the BCI scores for every bridge in the Council's bridge stock gives the Bridge Stock Condition Index (BSCI), an indicator of the overall condition of the Council's bridge stock, with a score from 0 (bad) to 100 (good). The BSCI values vary with time as inspections are carried out and data is updated.

The current Highland BSCI avg is 78.92 and BSCI crit is 65.90. The following charts illustrate the distribution of BCI scores for the Council's bridges:-





8 Performance Indicators

8.1 The following table shows key performance indicators for Highland Council Structures, together with a comparison against averages for the SCOTS family group (rural) and Scotland as whole.

Performance Indicators for Highland Council Structures

APSE/ SCOTS PI	Highland Council				Family Group Avg.	Scot-land Avg.
	2022/ 23	2023/ 24	2024/ 25	2025/ 26		
% of PIs carried out on time	92.5	48.9	100	95.7	67.7	62.1
% of GIs carried out on time	54	53.5	97.0	98.0	83.1	84.7
BSCI average	79.5	78.7	79.3	78.9	83.5	86.7
BSCI critical	65.7	65.2	66.3	65.9	71.7	76.2
% of Council bridges failing EU standards	9.7	9.7	9.7	9.7	3.41	2.2
% of Council road bridges with unacceptable weight, height or width restriction	0.2	0.2	0.2	0.2	0.4	1.4

Notes on the performance indicators:-

1. APSE = The Association for Public Service Excellence.
2. SCOTS = The Society of Chief Officers of Transportation in Scotland.
3. PI = Principal Inspection, GI = General Inspection; a higher % complete is a better result.
4. BSCI = Bridge Stock Condition Indicator (a numerical score out of 100 representing of the overall condition of the Council's bridge stock); a higher score is a better result.
5. % failing standards and % with unacceptable restrictions; a lower % is better.
6. The APSE data (last two columns) are provisional from 2024/25.

9 Works Programmes

9.1 Works on Council Road structures fall into five streams, depending upon funding source:-

- Minor works and maintenance as in 9.2;
- Small and medium schemes as in 9.3;
- Major bridge schemes as in 9.4 to 9.7;
- Other schemes as in 9.8; and
- Third party schemes as in 9.9

9.2 **Minor works and maintenance**
Minor works and maintenance of road structures are managed by local Roads Area offices and are funded from their individual revenue budgets, reported separately.

9.3 **Small and medium schemes**
The 2026/27 budget allocation for small and medium bridges is **£741k.** This is the 'bridges, walls and culverts' (BWC) which is part of the Roads service's capital allocation (figure given in Appendix 2 of Committee Report HC/18/26, agreed at Full Council meeting on 25 June 2026).

The prioritisation list
The Structures Section maintains a prioritised list of schemes for this budget. The prioritised order is indicative and schemes from the list are progressed as resources allow. New schemes are added from time to time as conditions change. A full copy of the list is given in Table 1.1 within **Appendix 1** of this report. The backlog of work on the list currently stands at **£10.27m**.

Schemes not on the prioritisation list
Schemes are sometimes progressed under this budget without being on the prioritisation list. The reasons for this may be to leverage funding opportunities or to address urgent repairs after an incident. A list of such schemes is given in Table 1.2 within **Appendix 1** of this report.

9.4 **Major bridge schemes – overview**
The five-year budget allocation, 2026/27 to 2030/31, for major bridges is **£9.602m** (extracted from Appendix 2 of Committee Report HC/18/26, agreed at Full Council meeting on 25 June 2026).

A prioritised list of approved and proposed major bridges is given within **Appendix 2**. The amount of work on the list currently stands at **£84.125m**.

9.5 **Major bridge schemes – update on 'named' projects**

Updates on live 'named' projects as of October 2026:-

- **A836 Naver Bridge replacement**: Construction commenced in July 2024 and was completed in August 2026. The bridge was opened by Economy and Infrastructure Chair Councillor Ken Gowans at an opening ceremony on the 25 September 2026.
- **Infirmary Bridge Repairs**: A repair scheme is under preparation, and it is anticipated to be carried out in 2027. This repair scheme will address the most critical areas of the bridge and replace the wooden deck. It does not include fully repainting the structure or repairing every deteriorated component.
- **Balnaan:** The overbridging of Balnaan Bridge was instructed at the Highland Council meeting on 24 September 2026 which recommended Option 2 from the report no. ECI/31/26 to Economy and Infrastructure (E&I) Committee on 20 August. The funding has since been confirmed by the Capital Programme Board. The design and planning for the works are due to start in November 2026. As reported in August the structure will be overbridged using a modular bridge system. This will require new piled foundations sitting behind each abutment. The approaches will be regraded to suit the height of the new bridge deck. It is expected that, now that funding has been secured, the bridge will be replaced in financial year 2027/2028.

9.6 **Major bridge schemes – update on other (not named) projects**

Updates on live projects under 'other major bridges' line:-

- **A836 Bonar Bridge Repainting**: Structural assessment work is underway to determine how the bridge may be safely encapsulated (wrapped in sheeting, whilst avoiding excess wind loading). Repainting is expected to take place in 2027 or 2028.
- **B861 Ness Bridge:** Preparations are currently underway to carry out a remediation and maintenance scheme on this bridge. Works have been delayed to summer or autumn 2027.
- **A890 Strathcarron Bridge:** A feasibility study is currently underway to investigate options for strengthening or replacing the 1930s concrete bridge carrying the A890 over the river Carron. Work has been delayed due to resource constraints.
- **Emergency Bridges:** Options are being considered to acquire more bridge units to replenish the Council's emergency bridge stock (see section 11 of this report).

9.7 **Major bridge schemes – managed decline**

Due to the shortage of funding the following two structures are in managed decline:-

- C1152 Spey Bridge Cromdale, near Grantown on Spey.
- U2400 Slochd Cottages Railway, near Carrbridge.

This means that the identified major schemes within **Appendix 2** for these structures will not be started, and the structures eventually closed. (Slochd Cottages Railway is already closed to motor traffic and requires a major scheme to allow reopening).

9.8 **Other schemes**

This category comprises schemes that are not funded from the Council's capital programme, but from other sources such as government grants, or damages paid after an incident. There are currently no schemes funded by grant money. In recent years, bids into the Strategic Timber Transport Fund have resulted in additional bridge replacements, although this match funding cannot be guaranteed for future projects.

9.9 **Third party schemes**

Third party schemes are works on Council bridges carried out by others such as wind farm developers. Several such schemes may be carried out in a typical year. In all cases, the Council Structures Section carries out the role of Technical Approval Authority to ensure that designs meet the required standard for public roads.

- **A838 Tirry Bridge** (just north of Lairg) had substantial concrete repairs carried out as part of the enabling works for Sallachy Wind Farm, by the developer Boralex. The bridge is now suitable for both normal traffic and the abnormal loads required for the wind farm. The bridge was previously on our prioritisation list for repair and has since been removed.

10 Structural Assessments

10.1 Assessments – purpose

A structural assessment is a theoretical calculation of the load carrying capacity of a structure. Assessments are required when a structure is suspected to be sub-standard, and the outcome will influence decisions on capital expenditure and works. These are different to inspections which identify defects. Assessments are not required for every load carrying structure and the programme will be determined on a technical needs' basis. Depending on the result of an assessment, restrictions such as a weight limit may need to be imposed on a structure prior to any further capital improvement works.

10.2 Assessments – funding

At present there is no additional funding for assessments and therefore they need to be undertaken from existing budgets. However, some assessments are undertaken each year as an essential part of a Council structures scheme or a private development.

11 Emergency Bridging

11.1 Emergency bridging – purpose

The Council holds a stock of emergency portable bridges, which can be deployed if a bridge fails unexpectedly.

11.2 Emergency bridging – stock

The emergency bridge stock comprises a variety of proprietary bridge types in a range of spans up to about 15 metres. Due to the increased costs of longer spans, and the smaller proportion of such bridges on the network (approximately 15% are greater than 15m), it is not considered economical to keep emergency stock for bridges longer than this. Due to deployments in recent years, the stock is now running low with one bridge remaining, and one due to be returned to stock before the end of 2026.

11.3 **Emergency bridging – proposals**

Preparations are underway to spend up to **£0.5m** from the major bridges capital allocation to acquire more emergency bridge stock. This was reported to members in our previous annual report (no. ECI/37/25) and was agreed at a Structures capital board meeting on 30 September 2026.

Designation:	Assistant Chief Executive – Place
Date:	8 October 2026
Author:	Andrew Tryon – Principal Engineer (Structures) Simon Farrow – Principal Technical Manager (Structures)
Background Papers:	TEC 77/13 Cattle and Deer Grids Policy COM 58/15 Bridges and Road Structures ECI 38/20 Road Structures Annual Report ECI/53/2021 Road Structures Annual Report ECI/33/22 Road Structures Annual Report ECI/63/2023 Road Structures Annual Report ECI 18/20 Strategic Timber Transport Scheme 2020/21 HCI/31/23 Capital Programme Review – General Fund HC/05/24 Place Based Approaches to Strategic Capital Planning and Asset Management HC/19/24 The Highland Investment Plan – Next Steps ECI/37/25 Road Structures Annual Report 2025 HC/18/26 Highland Investment Plan Update
Appendices:	Appendix 1 – Small and medium schemes Appendix 2 – Major bridges priority list Appendix 3 – Descriptions for selected major bridge schemes

Appendix 1 – Small and Medium Schemes

Appendix 1.1 Priority List for Small and Medium Schemes

The following table shows the top 30 priority small and medium schemes. The prioritisation is indicative, and the actual order in which projects are progressed is decided based upon engineering considerations and resource availability.

[2]	1.1 Small and medium schemes priority list No.	Bridge Code	Bridge Name	Area	Priority Score[1]	Est. £k	Cum. Total (£k)	Scope of Work	Lifeline [3]
*	1	U28360020	ALLT NA CROITE	Inverness	65.1	125	125	Redeck (currently steel and timber)	Y
	2	A08320330	POOLEWE	Ross and Cromarty	64.3	260	385	Concrete investigation and repair	
*	3	U10440010	AULTVOULIN	Lochaber	63.8	160	545	Deck replacement	Y
	4	U12780050	INSHORE NO 2	Sutherland	63.8	160	705	Cape Wrath road, refurbishment, combine with U12780030 Daill Bailey	Y
	5	U10310010	AILEIN	Lochaber	62.9	125	830	Redeck (currently steel and timber)	Y
*	6	B08170051	AVERON FOOTBRIDGE	Ross and Cromarty	61.7	415	1245	Assessment then Repair or Replacement	
	7	C11500020	BRACORA	Lochaber	60.1	90	1335	Minor bridge deck replacement	Y
	8	B80070120	ALLT FHEARGAIS	Lochaber	59.9	260	1595	Replacement	Y
	9	U10150040	ALLT DEARG	Lochaber	58.8	160	1755	Replacement	
	10	C11920030	SWORDALE	Lochaber	57.8	105	1860	Redeck (currently steel beams and corrugated steel deck)	
	11	C10940090	SCHOOL	Lochaber	57.6	315	2175	Replacement	Y
*	12	B91540010	MOY	Inverness	56.9	160	2335	concrete investigation and repair, assessment	
	13	U12780030	DAILL BAILEY	Sutherland	56.6	210	2545	Cape Wrath road, refurbishment, combine with U12780050 Inshore No 2	Y
	14	C11530080	STOCHD CHULCHARN 2	Lochaber	55.8	125	2670	Redeck (currently steel and timber)	Y
	15	B80570050	FIREMORE	Ross and Cromarty	55.7	430	3100	Minor bridge deck replacement	Y
*	16	U19900010	LEALTY	Ross and Cromarty	53.6	345	3445	Repair and possible widening	Y
	17	B91780010	DULNAIN	Badenoch and Strathspey	51.9	315	3760	Repair of cantilever	
	18	U19070010	DUBLIN	Ross and Cromarty	51.8	45	3805	Tie bar repairs (consider Braeintra, Littlemill and Dublin as 1 project)	Y
	19	A08320270	GRUDIE	Ross and Cromarty	51.0	260	4065	Concrete repairs	
	20	A08610140	CLADACH	Lochaber	48.8	415	4480	Propped bridge. Probable replacement	
	21	A08610230	GOUR	Lochaber	48.0	257	4737	Repaint, waterproof, resurface, parapet replacement	
*	22	U19210010	ACHNAGARRON	Ross and Cromarty	47.8	170	4907	Repair	
*	23	B90070040C93	AIRDRIE MILL BURN	Nairn and Cawdor	47.4	210	5117	Repairs	
	24	C12230010	OLD SHIEL	Ross and Cromarty	47.0	315	5432	Refurbishment	Y
	25	B90900020	HOWFORD	Nairn and Cawdor	46.6	210	5642	Steelwork repairs and repaint	
	26	U28230010	LOWER FOYERS BAILEY	Inverness	45.7	160	5802	Redecking of bailey bridge	Y
	27	A08350250	KNOCKAN	Sutherland	45.6	365	6167	Parapet replacement, concrete investigation	
	28	U14230010	ALLT CURRACHAN	Inverness	45.3	330	6497	Investigate options for repair/replacement	
	29	B91610010	LITTLEMILL	Ross and Cromarty	44.3	45	6542	Tie bar repairs (consider Braeintra, Littlemill and Dublin as 1 project)	Y
	30	A08390010	PITTENTRAIL	Sutherland	43.9	130	6672	Refurbishment	
	31	U32670010	ACHVAICH	Sutherland	43.8	241	6913	Replace structure. Options study.	Y
	32	A08350270	LEDMORE	Sutherland	43.6	285	7198	Parapet replacement, concrete investigation	
	33	A08320090	GRUDIE	Ross and Cromarty	41.7	210	7408	Investigation to determine scope of repairs	
	34	U48090010	CHRACAIG	Eilean a' Chèo	40.5	415	7823	Repair and refurbish	Y
	35	U10430009	BALLACHTY	Caithness	38.9	125	7948	Scour repairs	
	36	A08550010	RIVER LEASGEARY	Eilean a' Chèo	38.8	425	8373	Strengthen edge, replace parapet, refurbishment	
	37	B08510030	ABERARDER	Inverness	38.6	65	8438	Movement joint replacement, concrete repairs, especially at pier.	
	38	A08610350	CEOL NA MARA	Lochaber	38.3	65	8503	Masonry repairs	

[2]	1.1 Small and medium schemes priority list No.	Bridge Code	Bridge Name	Area	Priority Score[1]	Est. £k	Cum. Total (£k)	Scope of Work	Lifeline [3]
	39	A08620090	LOVAT	Inverness	38.2	215	8718	Masonry repair and scour protection	
	40	C10870030	AN UILLT BHIG	Ross and Cromarty	37.2	375	9093	Strengthening and refurbishment	
	41	B09700200	NETHY	Badenoch and Strathspey	37.0	145	9238	Repointing	
	42	A08380220	KYLE OF TONGUE	Sutherland	36.2	85	9323	Movement joint replacement	
	43	A08380080	ACHFARY	Sutherland	34.6	565	9888	Waterproofing and resurfacing, concrete repairs	
	44	A08610340	CAMUSCHORK	Lochaber	33.3	65	9953	Masonry repairs	
	45	U21040030	SHERRAMORE	Badenoch and Strathspey	32.2	210	10163	waterproofing / Joints / vegetation	Y
	46	A08630140	CAROY	Eilean a' Chèo	30.5	105	10268	Waterproofing and resurfacing, parapet replacement	

Notes

[1] The priority score is out of 100 with higher scores being worse.

[2] Lines above marked thus '*' indicate projects from this list that are currently in progress.

[3] For the purposes of this report a bridge is considered "Lifeline" if it is on a route with no available diversion (i.e. a dead-end road).

Appendix 1.2 Small and Medium Schemes NOT on the Priority List

The following table lists bridge schemes that are currently in progress against the bridges, walls and culverts budget, but not included in the priority schemes listed in Appendix 1.1. For each scheme, justification is given below for why it is being progressed ahead of the prioritised list.

Appendix 1.2 Small and medium bridge schemes not on Priority List						
Bridge Code	Bridge / Scheme Name	2020 Op Areas	Est £k	Scope of Work	Justification for Progressing Scheme ahead of Normal Prioritisation	Lifeline [1]
U22390040	DALNAHEITNACH	Badenoch and Strathspey	30	Replacement of bridge as part of re-naturalisation of landscape	Budget to cover Highland Council input with design and construction being funded by Cairngorm National Park.	Y

The amounts above are not scheme totals, but are the amount expected to be funded from bridges, walls and culverts budget.

[1] For the purposes of this report a bridge is considered “Lifeline” if it is on a route with no available diversion (i.e. a dead-end road).

Appendix 2 – Major Bridges Priority List

The following table shows the top priority major schemes, together with an indication of affordability based on the current five-year capital programme budget **£9.602m** (extracted from Appendix 2 of Committee Report HC/18/26, agreed at Full Council meeting on 25 June 2026).

Appendix 2.1 Major bridge schemes priority list									
No	**Bridge Code**	**Bridge Name**	**Area**	**Priority Score[1]**	**Est £k**	**Cum Total £k**	**Scope of Work**	**Funded?**	**Lifeline [5]**
1	B08610010	NESS	Inverness	65.7	1850	1850	Half joint capacity mitigation, repairs and re-waterproofing	Yes[2]	
2	A08900080	STRATHCARRON	Ross and Cromarty	64.1	11000	12850	Major refurbishment (possible replacement)	Partly[3]	
3	F00000020	INFIRMARY	Inverness	62.6	535	13385	Refurbishment	Yes	
4	B08630060	KINLOCHLEVEN VIADUCT	Lochaber	61.2	2550	15935	Assessment, feasibility study and refurbishment	Partly[3]	
5	C11520020	SPEY BRIDGE CROMDALE	Badenoch and Strathspey	60.6	2200	18135	Assessment and Refurbishment	No [4]	
6	A08360090	BONAR	Sutherland	58.8	1450	19585	Refurbishment	Yes[2]	
7	B80070070	GLENMORE	Lochaber	57.9	1900	21485	Replacement	Awaiting	Y
8	C11060010	BLACK BRIDGE KILMORACK	Inverness	57	15000	36485	Replacement (possibly by SSE)	Awaiting	
9	A088400XX	A884 BRIDGES	Lochaber	56.9	2870	39355	Replacements (Creiche, Cloiche, Easgadill)	Awaiting	Y
10	A08360260	BORGIE	Sutherland	54.1	770	40125	Refurbishment	Awaiting	
11	C11540030	DULSIE	Nairn and Cawdor	52.6	480	40605	Refurbishment	Awaiting	
12	C11080050	MAULD	Inverness	52.2	7550	48155	Replacement	Awaiting	
13	B91590010	WICK HARBOUR	Caithness	47.2	10450	58605	Replacement	Awaiting	
14	A08310100	COMAR	Inverness	46.6	850	59455	Refurbishment	Awaiting	
15	C11190010	BALNAAN	Badenoch and Strathspey	46.5	2000	61455	Overbridging	Yes	
16	A08940030	KYLESKU	Sutherland	44.8	2450	63905	Refurbishment	Awaiting	
17	A08840090	ACHNAGAVIN	Lochaber	44.6	920	64825	Refurbishment	Awaiting	
18	A08320060	MOY	Ross and Cromarty	44.4	12500	77325	Replacement	Awaiting	
19	A08840080	ACHARN	Lochaber	43.2	1200	78525	Refurbishment	Awaiting	
20	A08380020	FIAG	Sutherland	40.5	1950	80475	Replacement	Awaiting	
21	U46200010	WATERLOO	Inverness	38.5	2650	83125	Steelwork repairs and repaint	Awaiting	
22	U24000020	SLOCHD COTTAGES RAILWAY	Badenoch and Strathspey	36.9	1000	84125	Strengthening and refurbishment	No [4]	

Notes
[1] The priority score is out of 100 with higher scores being worse.
[2] Scheme funded under the generic major bridges line of the five-year capital programme.
[3] Scheme is partly funded (initial feasibility and design only) under generic major bridges line of capital programme.
[4] Structure in 'managed decline'.
[5] For the purposes of this report a bridge is considered “Lifeline” if it is on a route with no available diversion (i.e. a dead-end road).
[6] Balnaan Bridge was previously reported as 120th in priority – this was in the context of the whole of the Highland Council bridge stock. For the structures on the Major Bridges list, it sits 15th.

Appendix 3 – Descriptions for selected major bridge schemes

Ness Bridge Remediation

Structure Name	Ness Bridge	**Structure Number**	B08610010
Location	B861 Young Street, Inverness	**Priority Score**	65.7
Area	Inverness	**Priority Ranking**	1
Description	77m long three-span post tensioned concrete bridge with half-joints		

Existing Risk



Ness Bridge is a high priority because it features post-tensioning and half-joints which are features at risk of hidden deterioration and sudden collapse. As such the bridge requires careful management. A special investigation and assessment in 2023 and 2024 revealed concerns with the half-joints which require addressing.

Potential Consequences

Half-joints, which are present on Ness Bridge carry a small risk of sudden failure. It is therefore critical to safety that appropriate solutions are implemented to ensure the continued safe operation of the bridge. Work is ongoing to determine the solutions.

Proposed Scheme

As of 2026, an option has been chosen to remediate the bridge, and detailed design work is currently underway with plans to start in summer or autumn 2027. There will be disruption to traffic during the work.

Funded?

Yes. The estimated **£1,850k** cost is covered by the current five year Highland Investment Plan.





Photos: Ness Bridge (top), crack under the half-joint (bottom left), special investigation, 2023 (bottom right).

Strathcarron Bridge Repairs

Structure Name	Strathcarron	**Structure Number**	A08900080
Location	A890, near Strathcarron Station	**Priority Score**	64.1
Area	Ross and Cromarty	**Priority Ranking**	2
Description	60m long 5 span concrete bridge		

Existing Risk



An assessment in 1987 concluded that the structure is substandard. There is significant cracking and spalling to the underside of the bridge deck, including to previously repaired concrete. High potential for requiring a weight restriction in the near future.

Potential Consequences

Closure or weight restriction would result in severe disruption to travel along the west coast, including the NC500 route. The diversion route is 140 miles via Drumnadrochit. This would cause significant disruption to local communities, not dissimilar to when rockfall d the A890 further south.

Proposed Scheme

A feasibility study commenced in 2025 has been delayed due to lack of resources. The study is expected to be completed by early 2027.

Funded?

Partly. There is sufficient funding in the current five-year Highland Investment Programme for the initial feasibility study, and possibly detailed design, but not for the works. The plan is to progress the scheme up to completion of detailed design so that it is ready for construction when funding becomes available. The estimated **£11,000k** cost of replacement is not funded in the current five-year programme.





Spey Bridge Cromdale Repairs and Repainting

Structure Name	Spey Bridge Cromdale	**Structure Number**	C11520020
Location	About 5km downstream from Grantown on Spey	**Priority Score**	60.6
Area	Badenoch and Strathspey	**Priority Ranking**	5
Description	60m metre long, 2 span steel truss bridge		

Existing Risk



The bridge has severe corrosion to the underside of the deck and widespread breakdown of the paint system. The corrosion is so severe that there are holes in some elements. One abutment is badly damaged, and the bridge is currently propped at one end. A 7.5 tonne weight restriction is in place.

Potential Consequences

It is likely that in the near future we will need to further restrict or close the bridge. The bridge is on the Speyside Way; therefore any closure will impact tourism, and active travel as well as the local communities and businesses.

Proposed Scheme

A refurbishment is required. The work would entail carrying out a structural assessment to determine the extent of repairs and if the prop can be removed, repairing the south abutment, pier, steelwork, installing new bearings, blast cleaning and repainting the whole structure. **However given the insufficient funding for major bridges, it is proposed for now not to progress a scheme and instead put the bridge into 'managed decline.'**

Funded?

No. The estimated cost of refurbishment is **£2,200k** is not funded in the current five-year capital programme.





Kinlochleven Viaduct Repairs

Structure Name	Kinlochleven Viaduct	**Structure Number**	B8630060
Location	B863, Kinlochleven	**Priority Score**	61.2
Area	Sutherland	**Priority Ranking**	4
Description	93m long, 10 span concrete viaduct. Grade A listed.		



Existing Risk

The concrete on both the columns and bridge deck is in a poor condition. There is widespread cracking and spalling, with exposed and corroding reinforcement bars. Some parts of the area under the bridge are cordoned off due to the risk of falling concrete.

Potential Consequences

Closure or weight restriction would result in disruption to the community of Kinlochleven. The south shore road is the main route in, although longer, narrower route exists on the north shore.

Proposed Scheme

Carry out structural assessment, concrete testing and feasibility study to examine options for the bridge. Assumed option at the moment is to carry out a full refurbishment of the bridge.

Funded?

Partly. Initial feasibility and design work is funded. The estimated works costs of **£2,550k** is not currently funded in the five-year capital programme.





Bonar Bridge Repainting

Structure Name	Bonar Bridge	**Structure Number**	A08360090
Location	A836, Bonar Bridge	**Priority Score**	58.9
Area	Sutherland	**Priority Ranking**	7
Description	104m span, steel arch bridge		

Existing Risk



Bonar Bridge had a paint inspection carried out in 2016, which stated that the paint system had largely failed and should be replaced within 5 years. The form of the structure is prone to sudden collapse if not adequately maintained. The structure is not currently a high risk for closure or restriction; this scheme is required to prevent a much larger repair bill in the future.

Potential Consequences

Bonar Bridge has a high strategic function on the Sutherland road network. It is one of only two bridges connecting East Sutherland and Caithness to the south. The other (A9 Dornoch Bridge) can be closed due to high winds. The form of the structure is prone to sudden collapse if not adequately maintained. This is one of our largest bridges, and therefore the cost of replacement will be very high (est. £30 million).

Proposed Scheme

Blast clean and repaint the entire structure. Minor repair works where required. Improve drainage around bearings. Remove redundant and unsafe access gantry.

Funded?

Yes. The estimated cost of **£1,450k** is funded in the five-year capital programme.





A884 Creiche to Easgadil Bridges

Structure Names	Creiche, Cloiche and Easgadil Bridges	**Structure Number**	A08840020 to 40
Location	A884 Carnoch to Lochaline Road, Loch Sunart	**Priority Score**	Between 46.5 & 56.9
Area	Lochaber	**Priority Ranking**	10
Description	Three reinforced concrete bridges between 3.3m and 11.40m span		

Existing Risk



Three bridges on the A884 on the south shore of Loch Sunart with concrete deck defects including cracking and spalling. Two of the bridges, Creiche and Cloiche, failed assessment in 1992 but are not subject to weight restriction. This means the bridges are potentially carrying loads in excess of their capacity and are therefore operating with a reduced factor of safety. There have been recent increases in timber transport traffic on the road.

Potential Consequences

If the previous assessment result is correct, then the bridges are operating at a reduced factor of safety and there is increased risk of collapse. Closure or weight restriction would cause disruption on the road to Lochaline.

Proposed Scheme

As a minimum, re-assessment is required. Re-assess Creiche and Cloiche bridges to determine whether replacement is required. Following re-assessment carry out a scheme to either repair the structures or replace them.

Funded?

No. The estimated cost of **£2,870k** to replace of all three bridges is not funded in the five-year capital programme.





Borgie Bridge Repairs

Structure Name	Borgie	**Structure Number**	A08360260
Location	A836 between Bettyhill and Tongue (NC 500)	**Priority Score**	54.1
Area	Sutherland	**Priority Ranking**	11
Description	42.5 m long, 5 span concrete structure, with masonry cladding.		

Existing Risk



The concrete bridge deck is in a poor condition with exposed and corroding reinforcement bars visible on the underside. Potential for continued deterioration leading to reduced capacity (and therefore weight restriction or closure).

Potential Consequences

Closure or weight restriction would result in severe disruption to travel along the north coast, including the NC500 route. The diversion route is 60 miles via Kinbrace. The communities affected would include the north coast from Tongue to Durness (to the west) and the north coast from Melvich to Thurso and Wick (to the east).

Proposed Scheme

Concrete investigation and testing to determine extent of repairs. Works contract for concrete repairs and installation of cathodic protection (to prevent further corrosion of rebar).

Funded?

No. The estimated repair cost of **£770k** is not funded in the five-year capital programme.





Glenmore Bridge Replacement

Structure Name	Glenmore	**Structure Number**	B80070070
Location	B8007, 2 mi west of Glenborrodale	**Priority Score**	57.9
Area	Lochaber	**Priority Ranking**	8
Description	9.5m long 2 span, reinforced concrete slabs		

Existing Risk



Glenmore bridge dates from circa 1950. As is common for bridges of this era, the reinforced concrete was constructed to lower standards than today and is now in poor condition. The bridge was assessed in 1996 as capable of carrying only 7.5 tonnes (full loading is 40 tonnes). No weight restriction was imposed on the bridge because it is a lifeline route providing the only road to Ardnamurchan and Kilchoan. As such the bridge is operating with a reduced factor of safety. This increases the risk that the structure might need to be closed or restricted if further deterioration occurs.

Potential Consequences

Glenmore is a lifeline bridge with no alternative diversion route. A weight restriction would be disruptive, and a bridge closure would cut off access to Ardnamurchan peninsula, including Kilchoan.

Proposed Scheme

Replacement with a new single span structure to avoid the need for a pier in the river. The lack of alternative route increases the priority of this project. An offline diversion would be required to ensure the road remains open. Some initial survey and design work has been undertaken but detailed design and land negotiations are not done.

Funded?

No. The estimated cost of **£1,900k** is not funded in the five-year programme.

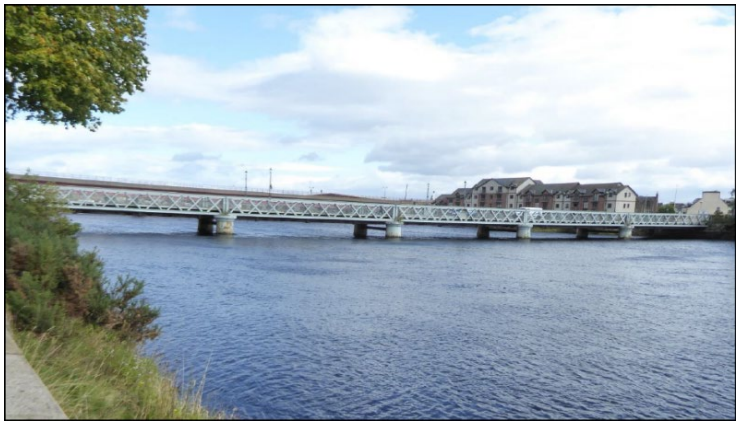




Waterloo Bridge Repairs

Structure Name	Waterloo	**Structure Number**	U46200010
Location	U4620 Grant Street at River Ness	**Priority Score**	38.5
Area	Inverness	**Priority Ranking**	22
Description	109m long 5-span half-through truss, assumed to be steel		

Existing Risk



Waterloo Bridge was constructed circa 1896 and is presently in poor condition due to paintwork failure and subsequent corrosion of steelwork. The bridge is substandard and has a 7.5t weight limit (except for some buses). Whilst the bridge is old, it is considered to be repairable by repainting and steelwork repair methods such as replacement and over-plating of members. The bridge is thought to be steel but might comprise wrought iron. Further testing and investigation would be required to confirm the materials.

Potential Consequences

Lack of repainting will allow corrosion of the steel to continue which will ultimately lead to further weight restriction or closure. This would cause traffic disruption in central Inverness. The bridge is also important because it carries services over the River Ness.

Proposed Scheme

Carry out a major maintenance scheme to extend the life of the structure. The scheme would comprise scaffolding, temporary encapsulation (to prevent pollution from paint removal), repainting, resurfacing and steelwork repairs. No preparatory work has yet been carried out; this would be a new scheme. The temporary scaffolding and encapsulation would be a significant part of the cost.

Funded?

No. The estimated cost of **£2,650k** is not funded in the five-year programme.



