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# Caol Local Place Plan

Local Place Plan  
November 2025



## Foreword

*The publishing of this plan has been a 'long time' in the making. Thanks to Mairi and to all the community in Caol for the work and energy that has gone into this task. What is my part in this – largely I have been that annoying voice in the background – “ Have you put this in – you really need to make sure you have included this.. ” During the development of the plan “ things have happened” within the community which I believe have prompted examination and thought – how do we include this in the plan??*

*I hope that this document and the other planning frameworks will become 'living documents' – that they will change and adapt over the years as the communities change. There are the big 'things' within the community like employment, prospects for advancement. The services need staff to run and Highland council and NHS need to develop their services to offer 'packages' that will attract and retain local people. And there are the 'smaller' things like the re-establishment of the bingo sessions in the community centre.*

*Caol has a lot of potential and should be given all the help and support to develop that. [The view from Caol shorefront – I believe is better than the view from Fort William... But I may be a little biased?] Points can be added to the plan but in the longer term I believe Highland council should take a role in encouraging and supporting ongoing development.*

*Many Thanks to you all and I look forward to the next 10 years of growth.*

*John.*

**Councillor John Grafton  
Ward: 11 Caol and Mallaig  
Highland Council**

*Caol Community Council deserves recognition for their work in producing a Local Place Plan. Their efforts to involve the community and develop a shared vision for the future are commendable. The plan reflects the unique character of Caol and provides a useful example for other communities. Their approach to inclusivity, sustainability, and collaboration offers a thoughtful pathway towards a more resilient future for local residents.*

**Councillor Liz Saggars  
Ward: 11 Caol and Mallaig  
Highland Council**

## Caol Community Council Statement

This Local Place Plan has been prepared by Northern Light Consulting on behalf of Caol Community Council.

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*I would firstly like to thank our Consultants, Northern Light, and especially Mairi Sandison, as without their involvement I don't think we would have been able to complete this Local Place Plan.*

*Thank you also to everyone who engaged with us over the last few years to ensure that the aspirations of the Community were included.*

*We have developed this Place Plan to ensure that the voice of the Community is heard when it comes to future developments, and look forward to this being included within the coming Highland Development Plan.*

*We look forward to delivering the priorities which have been identified, and being fully involved in future projects within our Community.*

**John Gillespie**  
Chair of Caol Community Council

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# 1. Introduction

This local place plan has been prepared by Northern Light Consulting on behalf of Caol Community Council. As a fully collaborative and aspirational plan for the future we strive to capture and address needs and wants of the community in order to ensure the community thrives for years to come.

We wanted to ensure that the plan reflects the desires of the whole community.

This plan also captures what collectively we believe we are doing well at present and what we seek to achieve.

Going forward, it is intended this report can be used to formulate a roadmap to ensure continued growth and prosperity.

From the original proposed plan, we garnered feedback on the communities priorities in order to progress to this final version with the hope to validate and register this plan in September 2025.

## 1.1. Place Plan Framework

Local Place Plans offer communities the opportunity to develop proposals for their local area, expressing their aspirations and ambitions for future change.

Local Place Plans were introduced by the Planning (Scotland) Act 2019, which contains a new right for communities to produce their own plans as part of the new Scottish planning system. Local Place Plans contain the community's proposals for the development and use of land and provide a new opportunity for communities to feed into the planning system with ideas and proposals.

However, Local Place Plans are more than just a plan: they can help communities understand what they want to be like in the future and help to develop a positive community identity. They can help develop local connections and collaborations and develop community capacity and improve social capital. They can support community aspirations on the big challenges for a future Scotland, such as responding to the global climate emergency and tackling inequalities. They are an opportunity for real, community-based change [[Our Place Scot, 2024](#)].

## 2. Our plan

[Northern Light Consulting](#) was engaged by Caol Community Council to develop this plan.

1. A number of existing documents were used in order to inform the preparation of this plan. Including –
  - Highland Council Local Place Plan Preparation Flow Chart
  - Highland Council Local Place Plan Template Guidance
  - Caol Locality Survey 2021
  - Draft Revised Caol Locality Plan – October 2023
  - Caol 'CAG' Community Action Group 2021/22
  - [Highland-wide Local Development Plan \(HwLDP\)](#)
  - Fort William Active Travel Master Plan 2019
  - [Fort William 2040 \(FW2040\) - Draft Fort William Town Centre Masterplan \[main document\]](#)
  - [West Highland and Islands Local Development Plan.](#)
  - [National Planning Framework 4 \(NPF4\)](#)
  - [Fort William Locality Plan](#) [FWCAG Action Plan V5 adopted Feb 2023]
  - [Highland-wide Local Development Plan](#) Evidence Consultation (HwLDP)

As part of this place plan the evidence consultation for the upcoming Highland Local Development Plan was reviewed. There are a number of statements within in this that reflect directly the contents of this Place Plan's findings.

- ***Housing [section 1.4]***; Recently, the Council declared a Housing Challenge because of the need to increase housing supply. To address these issues through the new Highland Local Development Plan (HLDP or "the Plan") this Paper aims to understand how Highland has changed and will change in terms of demographics, location, and workforce availability. Collectively, this evidence will help inform the Plan's decisions on where and how much land will need to be identified to meet future housing need and demand, employment opportunities, and to sustain more fragile communities and areas.
- ***Housing has been identified within this place plan as a need, locations to build in Caol are limited due to the nature of the village at present. Call for Development Sites in early 2025 is noted and will be discussed with consultees.***
- ***Road Infrastructure Challenges [Section 2.1]***; Significant Road Capacity Constraints and Investments – many journeys within Lochaber are of limited mode choice, lengthy, expensive and unreliable. Fort William suffers from significant congestion for most of the year along and connecting to the A830 and A82 trunk roads. Programmed

investment in enhanced berthing and marshalling areas at the Corran Narrows will assist in better connectivity to Ardgour and beyond. Otherwise, there are general concerns about road surface, bridge and winter condition issues on the local road network. Many roads are lifeline connections to remote rural communities with no practicable alternative route and many of the A roads still have single track sections. *Road challenges have also been a significant aspect of discussions are Caol Local Place plan. Residents of Caol are significantly impacted by congestion on the A82 and the A830 and restricts access to Fort William Town Centre and beyond regularly.*

- *Safe Access Walking; [Section 7]* Fort William is regarded as well connected for walking, but could benefit from improved lighting on route to Caol for safety; better cycle paths and safer crossing area at the high school to get to the pump track and 'astro' pitch. This was also echoed throughout this place plan. *Residents have noted the improvements made by the Caol and Lochyside Flood Scheme pathway – yet there are small sections that are currently unfinished.*
- *Lack of Infrastructure; [Section 7]* Recent cuts to Fort William bus services during summer congestion have made young people dependent on lengthy car journeys to access social opportunities and employment. This also has been echoed in this report, the need for more regular transport to Fort William Town Centre is needed.
- *Youth Space Options; [Section 7]* Designated youth spaces and teenager friendly spaces; skate parks; accessible and free to use outdoor spaces for sports (current spaces either have restricted access, prohibitively costly, or fully booked) and spaces for play and socialising which feature shelter from inclement weather. Playparks and outdoor spaces are often unappealing (overgrown, litter and glass), leading to young people facing public challenge when congregating in built up areas.
- *Greenspace [Section 7]* Use of housing green space for resident growing and planting schemes. This was reflecting in discussions and a possible location identified.

Note that Caol Community Council consider that the proposed new LDP to be adopted should be amended as detailed in Section 7.

## **2.1. Timeline**

- The first draft was submitted to Caol Community Council in September 2024
- Following this a proposed plan was submitted to Highland Council in May 2025.
- Following amendments, consultation and review was ongoing until July 2025.
- Following any feedback, the final Caol Local Place Plan will be submitted to Highland Council by September 2025 for validation and registration with the Scottish Government.

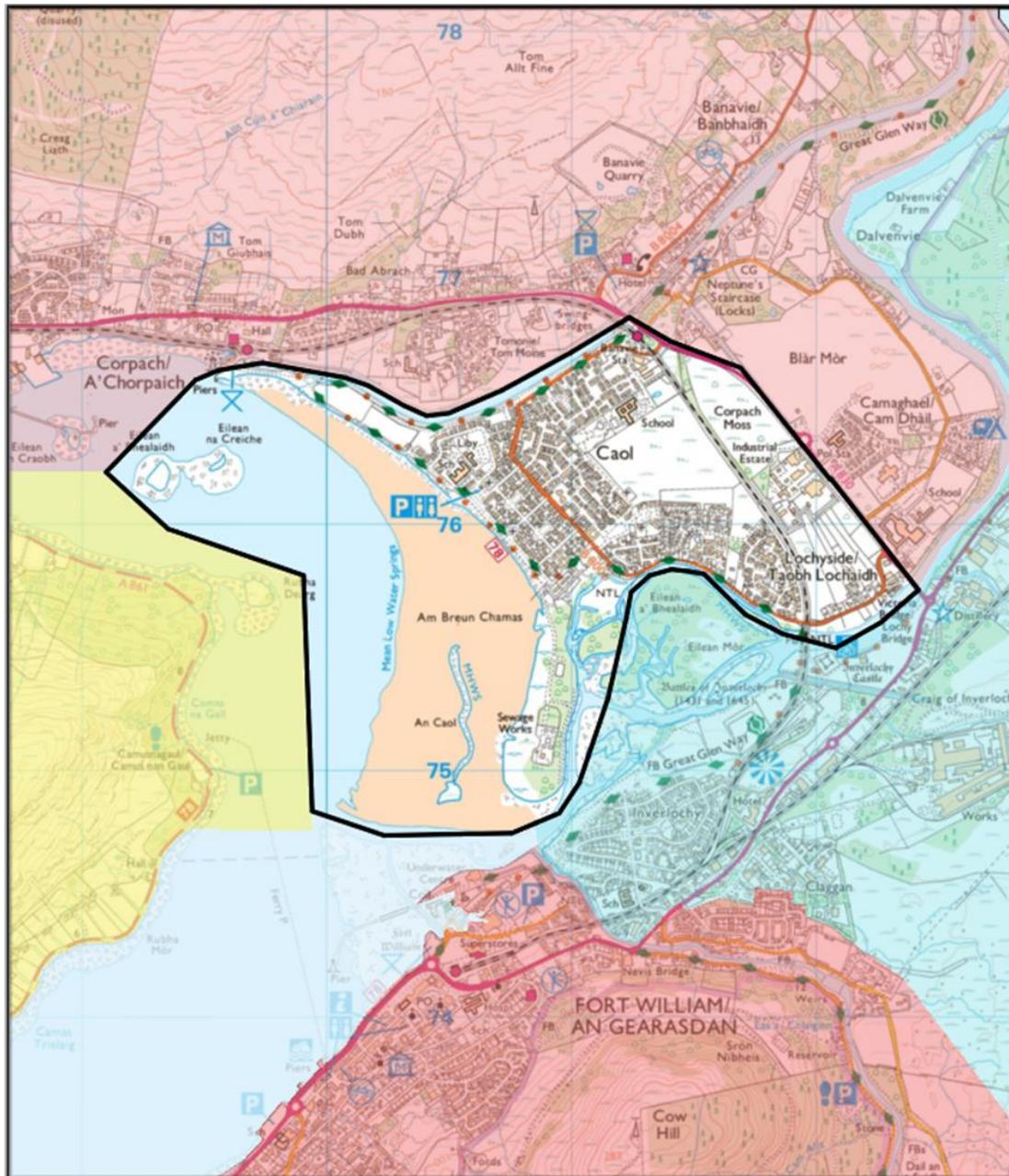
### 3. Our Community



*Image 1: Caol Village, View of Ben Nevis for Caol Shore*

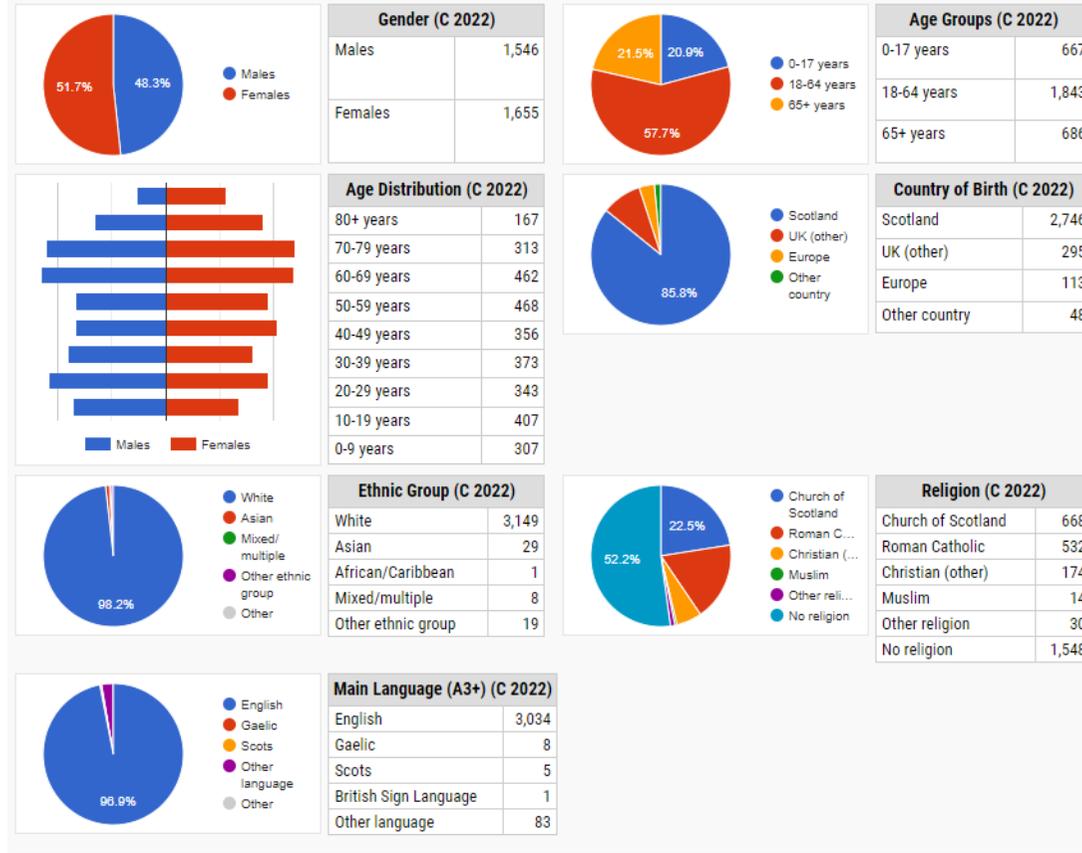
Caol lies at the Northern shore of Loch Linnhe and within sight of Fort William and Ben Nevis. With surrounding settlements of Mossfield, Riverside Park, Old School Court and Castle Drive situated along the river Lochy, known as Lochyside.

*A Boundary Map as below:*



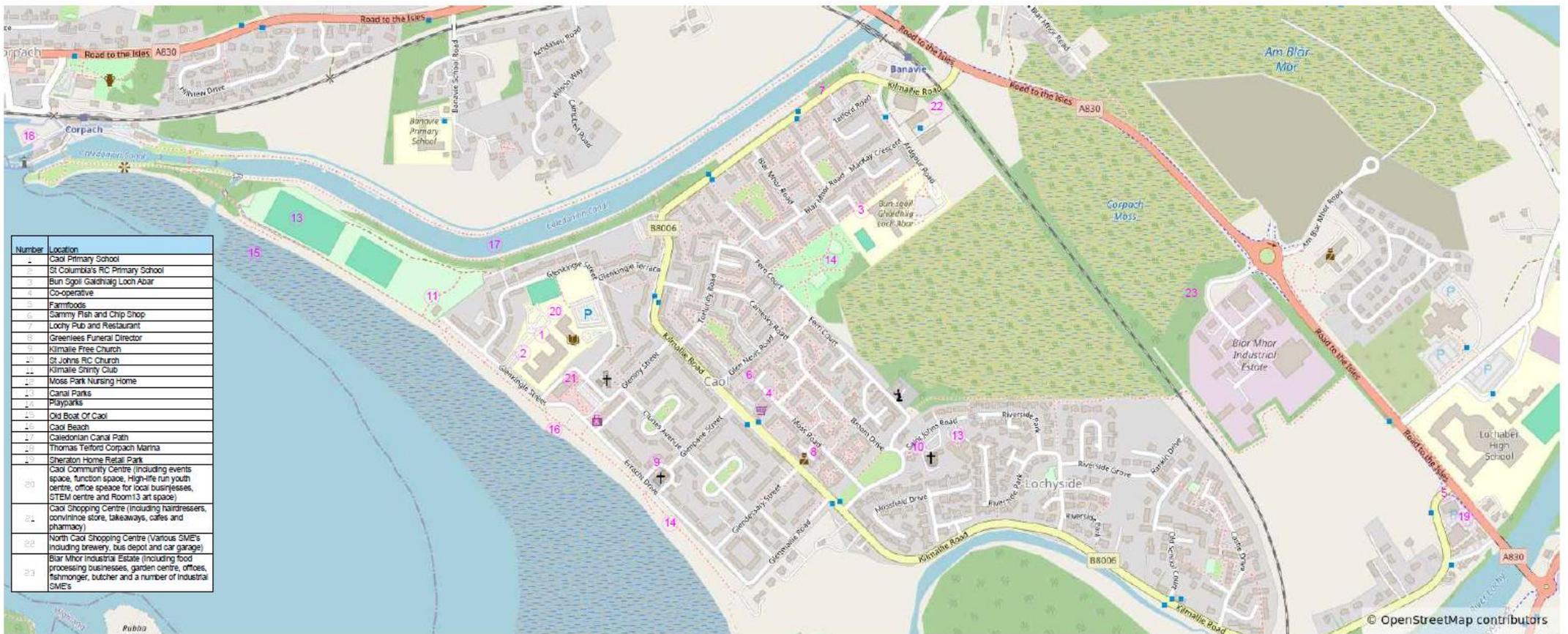
- The population is estimated as 3,202 [2022 Census]
- The total area is 3.036 km<sup>2</sup>
- The population density is 1,055/km<sup>2</sup> [2022 Census]
- Annual Population Change [2011 → 2022] 0.010%

**Further information about the population structure:**



Within the village of Caol and Lochyside there are the following amenities;

Generally Significant Buildings/Land
Caol Primary School
St Columba's RC Primary School
Bun Sgoil Ghaidhlig Loch Abar / & Nursery
Caol Nursery
Coop Caol
Sammys Fish & Chip Shop
Lochy Pub and Restaurant
Blar Mhor Industrial Estate (Including food processing businesses, garden centre, offices, fishmonger, butcher and a number of industrial SME's)
Caol Shopping Centre (Including hairdressers, convenience store, takeaways, cafes and pharmacy)
North Caol Shopping Centre (various SME's including brewery, bus depot, car garage)
St Johns RC Church
2 large playparks and several small ones
Kilmallie Free Church
Kilmallie Shinty Club
Caol Community Centre (Including events space, function space, High-Life run Youth Centre, office space for local businesses, STEM centre and Room13 art space.
Moss Park Nursing Home
Farmfoods
Sherton Homes Retail Park
Canal Parks
Old Boat of Caol (Shipwreck)
Greenlees Funeral Directors
Thomas Telford Corpach Marina
Caol Beach & Caledonian Canal Path



Map of significant buildings shown in the table above.

## 4. A View to the Future

*From consultation and analysis, Caol and Lochyside's future aspirations will be outlined in the draft plan and returned to the community for review and further input.*

### 4.1. Initial Engagement

All engagement undertaken has been captured in this document.

The response to this consultation stage has been as below –

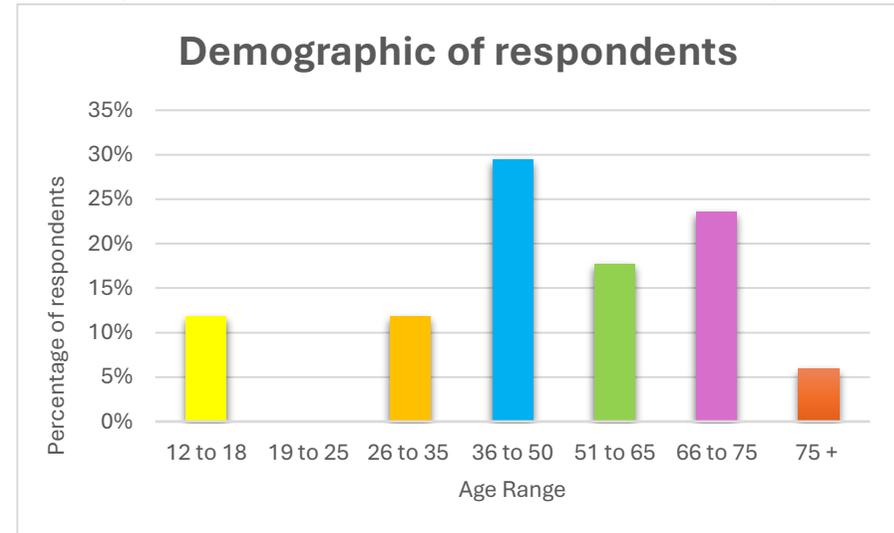
- ❖ 23 completed online
- ❖ 11 in-person interviews and meetings

The age demographic is demonstrated in the graph:

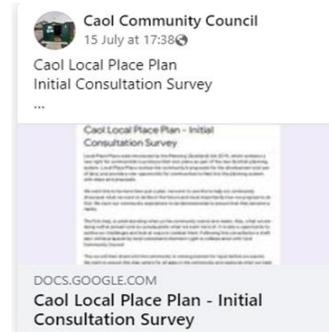
In this consultation stage, it was identified as a priority to ensure there was a wide breadth of input from individuals of each demographic.

- Ongoing discussions with Caol Community Council
- Ongoing with High Life Highland (youth centre/youth worker dialogue); attendance at a holiday club session where young people contributed.
- Ongoing dialogue with Caol Regeneration Company (organise the lunch club/walking club), attendance at a Wednesday lunch club session.
- Dialogue with the Caol Tenant Participation Officer; attendance at the group organised event.
- Online google form survey.
- Shared via social media (Caol Tenant Participation page, Caol Community Council, NLC Page).
- Paper copies have been shared in locations such as Caol Library and Caol Community Centre.
- Attendance at local family fun day
- Posters with scannable QR codes have been situated on all community noticeboards for 8 weeks.

There are a number of factors which resulted in the response rate to be slightly lower than anticipated.



- School summer holidays and so a feeling that perhaps parents are less likely to fill out an online form.
- Lower attendance at youth club due to holidays etc.
- Survey fatigue after various consultations in the last few years, CAG, locality plan, FW20 input.
- Fatigue with Highland Council lack of action on certain issues that have been raised for a number of years without any change
- Frustration with key issues in the area e.g. Belford Upgrade, Traffic congestion, grass cutting etc. A community wide feeling 'what's the point', 'nothing changes.'



Local Place Plans were introduced by the Planning (Scotland) Act 2019, which contains a new right for communities to produce their own plans as part of the new Scottish planning system. Local Place Plans contain the community's proposals for the development and use of land, and provide a new opportunity for communities to feed into the planning system with ideas and proposals.

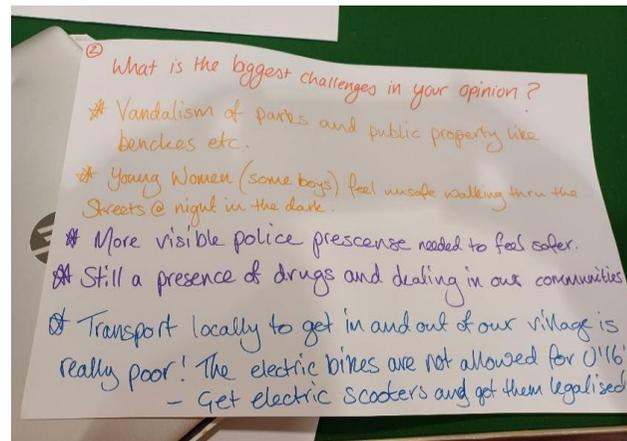
**We want this to be more than just a plan: we want to use this to help our community showcase what we want to be like in the future and most importantly how we propose to do this !!**

The first step, is understanding what us the community wants and needs. Also, what we are doing well at present and so consequently what we want more of. It is also a opportunity to outline our challenges and look at ways to combat them.

Following this consultation a draft plan will be prepared by local consultants [Northern Light](#) in collaboration with Caol Community Council.

This we will then share with the community in coming months for input before we submit.

We want to ensure this plan caters for all ages in the community **ALL residents of Caol & Lochside** and captures what we need to improve.



Throughout the consultation similar themes were noted from various individuals. For example, the importance of events and social meet ups in the community. Alongside key issues, like the frustration with traffic congestion from Caol heading to and from Fort William and the lack of well-maintained green space within the community.

Below, all the various strengths and challenges captured are outlined.

#### **4.2. Strengths Identified**

- Active community groups bettering our community was noted various times
- Facilities such as the community centre and the flood scheme shore walk were valued
- Regular social events e.g. the Easter and the Christmas event. As well as the lunch club, prize bingo, community shore clean up days, seasonal events were discussed in person and in survey feedback.
- Appreciation for Caol in Bloom
- LAD, Shinty, youth work, library and others all supporting people and helping them come together in different ways.
- Bite and blether sessions were reported to be popular.
- Ensuring there is less food waste via the Community Cupboard and food deliveries
- The work carried out through the Resident Participation Group
- Pro-active volunteers
- Upgrades of infrastructure, with particular reference to the flood defence shore walk
- Communication updates were noted as something that the Caol community is doing well, particularly during the pandemic.
- Giving the community the opportunity to have their voice heard
- Adult learning events
- Addition of Corpach Marina Development
- Appreciation for the men's shed
- Feeling of a safe community with little vandalism
- Schools take responsibility for their grounds and keeping them tidy
- The walkway at the shorefront looks nice for locals and tourists and has a good look

### 4.3. Challenges Identified

- Traffic Congestion. Commuting into town. The road network is not coping as housing, business and tourism increases in volume. Concerns for emergency services having difficulty getting through traffic. Also, restrictions on children's after school activities and school pick-ups as the time scale to get through traffic is huge. This was repeatedly noted as a notable challenge for the community.
- Shortage of industrial, commercial and residential property to facilitate economic growth
- Lack of grass cutting services particularly in communal squares and parks.
- Litter issues
- Dog mess has been overwhelmingly reported.
- Lack of facilities for young people [particularly teenager] and vulnerable people. The feeling that young people are 'bored'.
- Safe green space maintained for all but especially our young people
- Cars parked where they shouldn't be making it unsafe for children to cross roads
- Concern for speeding in certain areas, particularly the road along Lochyside.
- Many larger vehicles such as work vans and lorries now occupying the residential parking spaces which impacts the ability to see safely along streets when crossing.
- Lack of shops and facilities to accommodate the growing number of houses on the Blar and Lochyside.
- Lack of sports facilities for young kids also both for public use and within the local primary schools. A respondent noted "As a parent and a coach with a local primary school football team I find it increasingly frustrating and difficult to find facilities to use. There is not one outdoor football pitch in the area that is available for use for primary schools and that is absolutely shameful. I can't think of another comparable sized town in Scotland I have seen with worse facilities availability".
- Young people's mental health and wellbeing is a particular concern that has been noted numerous times.
- Lack of affordable housing
- Loss of post office,
- Aging population, pressures on services [care at home, mental health support].
- Behaviour of young people due to the fact there's not enough available for them to engage in.
- Swing parks are run down and in desperate need of upgrade.
- Young parents having to take their children out of the village to access facilities such as sport, music and other types of tuition.

- Lighting of public areas
- A clean and enjoyable shore and beach.
- Reduction in the bus service recently.
- Weeding and general maintenance of public walkways and shop fronts at the shopping centre
- Vandalism of parks and public property like benches etc.
- Young women (some boys) feel unsafe walking through the streets at night in the dark. Lack of police presence.
- Still a presence of drugs and dealing in our communities
- Electric bikes (Hi-bike scheme) are not allowed to be used by under 16's

#### 4.4. What we value in our community

In order to establish what is truly most important to our community we asked them to note what they value most. A number of options were given, and respondents could choose more than one option. Results are shown below;



From this it is clear that the individuals in the community value greatest the below –

- Safety and Security
- Access to green space
- Facilities
- Events and social meet-ups

"Other" category included:

- Local sports clubs
- Access to paths and cycle routes
- The Community Centre

It is therefore critical that these four key priorities are at the forefront of our following calls to action.

#### **4.5. What we would like to see improved**

The responses to this question although varied remain centred around similar themes as demonstrated in the graphic below.

In general terms a large response centred around better utilisation and communication of our existing facilities.



#### 4.6. Infrastructure/Services that are missing

Consultees and groups discussed varying amenities or infrastructure absent in the community as reflected below -



#### 4.7. Traffic Congestion

The issue of traffic congestion was the most dominant topic in all discussions and responses throughout this project. It is accepted that the current issues with traffic management is the biggest challenge for residents.

As a question we asked respondents '*Where do you believe improvements should be made?*' the options were as follows -

- Remove current Caol link road corridor
- Retain the current Caol link road corridor
- Additional roundabout on the A830 Caol exit [prior to the Caledonian Canal]
- Improved bus routes
- Improved Walk/ cycle paths
- Other
  - Additional traffic calming
  - One way traffic system around Caol
  - A bridge linking town to Caol at the end of the spit [water facility end] of Caol and the cycle path being linked up all the way round instead of having to come off it and go onto main streets again!
  - Short term park and ride facilities may be an option on the fringes of the town for those travelling into town in summer months.
  - Encouraging active travel
  - Improved path between High School and Moor Road Caol. Safer way home for pupils away from traffic.
  - Instead of just retaining Caol link corridor it should be funded!!!
  - Better walkway to high school

Various respondents questioned the Retain / Remove the Caol link corridor actually means. 9 individuals said retain the link road corridor and 4 noted removing the link road corridor.

The Caol Link Corridor has been a discussion point over a number of years. The route requires a bridge over and embankments on approach to the Fort William to Mallaig railway line plus the bridging of the River Lochy close to its widest point. The route crosses land most of which is either subject to flood risk and/or of poor ground conditions. The route corridor is already encroached by existing and permitted development notably at Caol by housing [see Figure 2 below] and at the Caol spit by the principal sewage works. Only short sections of the route are within roads authority control, the balance is in private ownership often with an overlapping of layer of crofting interests.



**Figure 2: Extent of Existing Development Close to Safeguarded Line for Caol Link Road**

*Source; West Highlands and islands local Development Plan (2016)*

In the calls to action section for this report we have suggested asking the community for suggestions and ideas for what they want to see to mitigate the traffic issue. Following initial consultation, feedback from Lochaber Transport Forum is **that this will not be going ahead.**

7 individuals suggested the addition of a roundabout at the A830 exit would be welcomed.

It is clear that mitigating traffic issues is of the utmost importance to local residents. It is noted that the wider traffic situation with the A82 has been contentious for many years, and Transport Scotland under successive governments have failed to deliver improvements. There have been multiple studies and options identified. It is difficult to suggest how a

Local Place Plan can include a clear call to action without duplicating work already done. However, this does not mean we should do nothing. At the very least, a clear plan of action for the Caol Link Road retention or removal would provide some certainty for the community, alongside some [relatively] minor local improvements. It is critical that this is included within the current remit of the [Fort William Integrated Transport Plan](#).

#### **4.8. Key Concerns**

Concerns listed were repeated throughout the survey on various responses. They are listed below for ease -

##### **Safer walkways for our young people**

- Informal paths around back of Caol and Blar Mhor industrial estate
- Crossing from the Lochyside flood scheme walk into Caol, joining the main road.

##### **Greater Police Presence**

- Concerns voiced by young people (particularly girls) regarding feeling unsafe on dark evenings

##### **Grass Cutting & General Maintenance of Public Areas**

- Regular grass cutting and maintenance of play parks
- Maintenance and clean and tidy appearance of shop fronts

##### **Traffic Calming**

- Concerns that the speed reduction measures both on Kilmallie road and Lochyside are not fit for purpose

##### **Traffic Congestion**

- Emergency Service access to Caol particularly in summer due to traffic congestion.

##### **Underutilisation of Caol Community Centre**

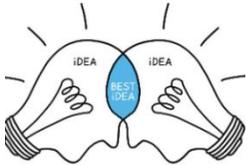
- A feeling that the community centre/youth centre is a segregated space that is not used to its full potential. Suggestion that this could come under the remit of a development trust/community coordinator remit.

##### **Mental Health**

- Ongoing concern for both young people and our community in general with mental health care. The ramifications community wide of the loss of life due to access to support services.

## 5. Our Aspirations

Aspirations for the next 10 years to meet the challenges and priorities of the community:

<p>Improving our current offering</p> 	<p>Utilise our existing facilities better. Both the Community Centre and Youth Centre could be used more. Free activities which can be accessed by everyone.</p> <p>Communication of current offering e.g. events, social meet ups, clubs, how people can help. Ensure everyone knows what's going on.</p> <p>Consistent annual street league type activities for our young people.</p> <p>More local tuition and entertainment for youngsters. Kilmallie shinty club do a lot but other sports, martial arts or music and dance could be encouraged.</p> <p>Recycling skips in each scheme for glass and skips for flats, not wheelie bins.</p>
<p>Fostering Community</p> 	<p>Local pride in our community.</p> <p>Family activities.</p> <p>Co-operation between various different organisations.</p> <p>Businesses and individuals taking responsibility for keeping public walkways and gardens clean and tidy.</p>
<p>Encouraging Collaboration</p> 	<p>Community engagement meet ups, and more people prepared to help at events and in projects to support them and enable them to be continued. Encouraging new volunteers to get involved with various projects.</p> <p>Co-ordinating more partnership working, especially amongst groups and organisations that depend on funding. There are lots of different skills within the community, so supporting groups to work together, sharing resources, learning and aims would be very beneficial.</p>

## 6. Calls To Action & Execution

From the points we have described above the potential routes to mitigate these challenges and improve our current community offering have been detailed below.

These calls to action come under the headings -

- ❖ Climate
- ❖ Services and Facilities
- ❖ Better Connections
- ❖ Community & Inclusion
- ❖ Infrastructure
- ❖ Health & Wellbeing

The areas identified for action have been highlighted in a map which can be seen in **Appendix A**.

Following a drop-in evening session in June 2025 to review the plan, a priority rating has been included below.



## 6.1. Climate

The importance of climate related action has been noted by a number of consultees throughout this process. A number of aspirations and challenges below with proposals to combat.

Climate					Priority Rating (Low/Med/High)
Challenge	Proposals	Responsibility	Cost	Timescale	
Introduction of a community garden <i>Appendix B</i>	A community space where school children/youth centre/the lunch club – well everybody! Could contribute too. Produce could also be distributed through the community cupboard.	Men's Shed / Caol in Bloom to take forward	Low	Short Term	Med
Highland and Islands Climate Hub	Membership of the Highlands and Islands Climate hub. To be used as an additional resource and consulted on various issues as they arise <a href="https://hiclimatohub.co.uk/membership">https://hiclimatohub.co.uk/membership</a>	CRC	Low	Short term	Low
Active Travel <i>Appendix C</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Request for Hi-Bike stations in Riverside/Old School Court ascertain if this is feasible</li> <li>Request for under 16's to use the e-bikes</li> </ul>	-	Med	Med/Long Term	Med/High
Kerb side food waste collection	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Feasibility if this is possible [understand it is done in Inverness</li> <li>Understand if this would be used by individuals</li> </ul>	Consultation with Lochaber Environmental	-	Med/Long Term	Low
Bus Service	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Concerns around the frequency of bus service as service is reduced</li> </ul>	Shiel Buses	-	Short Term	High

## 6.2. Services and Facilities



Image from left to right; Caol Primary School, Coop Caol, Thomas Telford Corpach Marina, Caol Flood Scheme walk.

Improvement of existing services and facilities was a key theme throughout this process, The community on a whole are notably satisfied with the current offering but believe there are small improvements which would make the greatest change.

Services and Facilities					RATING
Challenge	Proposal	Responsibility	Cost	Timescale	
Regular grass cutting; a key issue to be mitigated is the lack of maintenance of greenspaces and play parks 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Regular grass cutting throughout the summer months in all areas</li> <li>Safety review of playparks and maintenance</li> </ul>	Highland Council	-	ASAP	High

Services and Facilities					RATING
Challenge	Proposal	Responsibility	Cost	Timescale	
Residential parking improvements  Appendix D	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Permits limiting number of cars in congested areas</li> <li>Scoping of new parking areas</li> <li>Looking at options for concreting sections of greenspace along shore front to prevent parking on grass verges</li> </ul>	-	-	Long Term	High
Litter & Dog Bins	To be placed along the new flood scheme walk – particularly along Lochyside	-	Low	ASAP	High
Introduction of a dedicated community worker	<p>Scope the remit, requirement and funding options for a community coordinator.</p> <p>Key issues to address</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>solve the issue of lack of coordination – to be a hub</li> <li>Overall responsibility for coordination of booking space</li> <li>Key holder for community spaces, access can be gained in evenings</li> <li>Gritting of outdoor spaces in winter months</li> <li>Sports hall usage</li> <li>Understand any potential overlaps with roles/people already in place either formally or informally.</li> </ul>	-	Med	Med Term	Med

Services and Facilities					RATING
Challenge	Proposal	Responsibility	Cost	Timescale	
Underutilisation of community centre and school hall/pitches	<p>A general feeling that facilities at the CC are not being utilised to the best of their ability.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Janitorial type keyholder</li> <li>• Access to school/ YC also to ensure spaces can be booked for clubs etc</li> <li>• options for events, such as mother &amp; baby group.</li> <li>• School campus accessible by all, improved coordination.</li> </ul>	-	-	ASAP	High
Greenspace beside MUGA  Appendix E	How can we make movement on this?	Highland Council		Short Term	Med

### 6.3. Better Connections

Better Connections					
Challenge	Proposals	Responsibility	Cost	Timescale	
Community warden/janitor options	As mentioned above.	-	-	-	
Post office	A post office located in the village again.	-	-	ASAP	High
Awareness of what's going on in the community	Coordination and communication of all the fantastic events and opportunities going on	-	Low	ASAP	High

## 6.4. Community & Inclusion



Images from left to right; Caol Easter Parade, Caol Christmas Party, Caol Community Cupboard, Thomas Telford Corpach Marina Community Day & Caol Weekly Lunch Club

Social events and activities were identified as an aspect that we value greatly in the community. It was perceived as Caol is doing well with this at present. A number of areas were identified where improvements could be made.

Community & Inclusion					RATING
Challenge	Proposals	Responsibility	Cost	Timescale/ Urgency	
More activities and spaces for our young people eg outside shelters, playing fields,	A holistic approach to where we can provide spaces for out young people	All	Low/Med	Ongoing	High
Mental health	Social events for all eg fundraising, safe space to talk sessions	All	Low/Med	Ongoing	High
Police presence	Concerns about the lack of presence and the feeling of young people feeling unsafe	Police	-	-	High

Community & Inclusion					RATING
Challenge	Proposals	Responsibility	Cost	Timescale/ Urgency	
Better utilisation of Caol Community Centre	Less segregation and better joined up thinking	All	-	ASAP	High
Heritage	Suggestion to add notice boards around the village walkways explaining about the history e.g. Shorefront/ Canal.	-	Med	Long Term	Low
Childcare	Concerns that a lack of childcare in the local area, particularly in Caol. More investigation required.	-	-	Long Term	Med
Creativity	Promotion of Room 13. Ensure people know about the facilities and opportunities		Low	Short Term	Med

## 6.5. Infrastructure

Infrastructure					RATING
Challenge	Proposals	Responsibility	Cost	Timescale/ Urgency	
Travel Congestion mitigation  Appendix F	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Roundabout at Banavie Exit</li> <li>• Caol link road (pros and cons)</li> <li>• Traffic calming measures if possible</li> <li>• Road safety measures are considered when developing infrastructure solutions.</li> </ul>	-	High	ASAP	High
Paths for all  Appendix G	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Canal path and Mossfield path connection ensure these are disabled/pram accessible, X2 sections of the new path that have not yet been finished, the section between canal parks and the hill up-towards the entrance to the canal.</li> <li>• Path between back of houses to high school along Blar Mhor industrial estate – proposals to make this safer.</li> <li>• A cycleway/pathway over the Caol spit giving a direct link to Inverlochy/Fort William.</li> <li>• Lack of fully functioning pavement at the entrance to St Johns Road</li> <li>• Accessibility throughout the village has been noted as could be improved with drop</li> </ul>	-	High	ASAP	High

Infrastructure					RATING
Challenge	Proposals	Responsibility	Cost	Timescale/ Urgency	
	kerbs and bins on pavements often challenging.				
Water Boat FS	Investigate Options for a summer water taxi from TTCM to FW.	-	Med/High	Short/ Med Term	Low
Campervan Infrastructure	Options to determine if this is a need in the village, eg waste disposal facilities.	-	Med/High	-	Med
Dog Park	Discussions about the options of a park specifically for dogs to be off lead. Investigation to whether is the feasible.	-	Med/High	-	Med
Gym facility in Community Centre	Option to have a community gym facility in the centre. Is this feasible in terms of space? Would this come under the remit of a community coordinator? To be investigated further.	-	Med/High	-	Med
Affordable housing Appendix H	Ongoing issue – to consider with new build houses the ramifications on other infrastructure eg requirement for shops, schools and other amenities.	-	Med/High	-	High
Corner shop within Castle Drive/Riverside	IS there a location, is there a possible plan to carry this out. Further investigations required.	-	Med/High	-	Low

## 6.6. Health & Wellbeing

Health and wellbeing					RATING
Challenge	Proposal	Responsibility	Cost	Timescale/ Urgency	
Mental health services and access to mental health.	Noted as a large concern within the community. Look at options in which we can support.	All	Low/Med	Short Term	High
Elderly care and accommodation	Importance of ensuring long-term needs of our elderly residents are respected and considered including nursing care, residential medical care and care at home needs.	All	High	Medium/Long Term	High
Promoting of adult learning	Ensure everyone is aware of the options currently available.	-	Low	ASAP	High
Community interaction	Future proofing events such as Bite and Blether and lunch club	-			Med
Safety for our young people	Options to combat the feeling of unsafe particularly for young people/ elderly people <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• police presence</li> <li>• self defence classes for young girls</li> <li>• increased lighting in certain areas</li> <li>• CCTV</li> </ul>	-	Low/Med	Short Term	High

Health and wellbeing					RATING
Challenge	Proposal	Responsibility	Cost	Timescale/ Urgency	
Community food cupboard and food delivery / circular waste	Identified as an area in which Caol is excelling in at present. Ensure this is ongoing and any further help it is required is noted.	-	Low	ASAP	High

## 7. Significant buildings & land for potential development

The below proposals were a result of initial consultation, and the below locations were identified and demonstrated in appendix, B-G.

Land or Building Reuse Proposed	Reasoning	Reference to West Plan	Shown on Map [By Appendix]
Introduction of a community garden	Waste land beside Caol Community Centre	HwLDP / WestPlan does not include this section of land, we believe that inclusion of this would be useful.	Appendix B
Active Travel Improvements	Request for Hi-Bike stations in Riverside/Old School Court	HwLDP / WestPlan does not include reference to introduction of e-bike station we believe that inclusion of this would be useful.	Appendix C
Greenspace beside the MUGA	Utilising waste land	HwLDP / WestPlan does not include this section of land, we believe that inclusion of this would be useful.	Appendix D
Roundabout at Banavie exit	Mitigating congestion issues	HwLDP / WestPlan / FW Active Travel Plan 2019 does not include amendments to this section of road, we believe that inclusion of this would be useful.	Appendix E
Paths for All	Canal and Mossfield connection missing	As these are small sections of the Flood Scheme Defence infrastructure these	Appendix F

		sections are missing from HwLDP / WestPlan / FW Active Travel Plan 2019.	
Affordable Housing	Requirement for housing	HwLDP / WestPlan does not include this section of land, we believe that inclusion of this would be useful.	Appendix G

Caol Community Council considers that the proposed new LDP to be adopted should be amended to include the proposals above.

## 8. Development Aspirations

Through consultations the community identified a need or want for the following developments, but no clear consensus or suggestions for the locations. As a result further investigation into the potential locations and feasibility will be required in the future.

Land or Building	Reasoning	Locations to be determined
Scoping of new parking areas	Complaints of limited parking locations	Explore and determine possible locations required
Campervan Infrastructure	A possible addition to the village	Explore and determine possible locations required
Gym facility in Community Centre	A possible area for the community to use	Explore and determine possible locations required
Affordable housing	Locations that may be utilised in the HC call for suitable locations	Explore and determine possible locations required
Corner shop within Castle Drive/Riverside,	A facility currently missing in Lochyside.	Explore and determine possible locations required

## 9. Feedback on Proposed Draft Plan

Further feedback was sought from the community and stakeholder on proposed draft plan in June 2025, based primarily around the proposed "calls to action".

### 9.1. Second Round Consultation

We asked consultees - Does this plan reflect the aspirations and concerns of the community at present? Do the challenges identified reflect your view? Do the calls to action reflect what you believe we need? We asked specifically for the calls to action to be prioritised from low/medium/high priority to the individual.

In order to do so we held a public meeting following the community Councils AGM in Caol Community Centre. There was around 9 attendees which was slightly lower than we hoped.

This was also sent out via email to all community council members, councillors, 23 community stakeholders and 3 local community groups.

The findings are as follows;

<u>Call to Action</u>	<u>Low Priority</u>	<u>Medium Priority</u>	<u>High Priority</u>
<b>Climate</b>			
Introduction of Community Garden	2	4	3
H&I Climate Hub	6	1	2
Active Travel	1	4	4
Kerb Side Food Waste Collection	4	2	3
Bus Service		3	6
<b>Services and Facilities</b>			
Grass Cutting		2	7

<u>Call to Action</u>	<u>Low Priority</u>	<u>Medium Priority</u>	<u>High Priority</u>
Residential Parking Improvements	2	2	5
Litter & Dog Bins		3	6
Community Worker		5	4
Underutilised of community centre and school/pitches	1	3	5
Greenspace beside MUGA	2	6	1
<b>Better Connections</b>			
Post Office	1	1	7
Awareness of community	3	2	4
<b>Community &amp; Inclusion</b>			
Activities for young people		4	5
Mental Health		4	5
Police Presence	1	2	6
Heritage	4	3	2
Childcare		6	3
Creativity	3	5	1
<b>Infrastructure</b>			
Travel Congestion Mitigation		1	8

<u>Call to Action</u>	<u>Low Priority</u>	<u>Medium Priority</u>	<u>High Priority</u>
Paths for all		1	8
Waterboat FS	6	3	
Campervan Infrastructure	3	3	3
Dog Park	3	3	3
Gym facility in CCC	3	5	1
Affordable Housing		2	7
Corner shop @ Castle drive	8		1
<b>Health &amp; Wellbeing</b>			
Mental health services		2	7
Elderly care and accommodation		2	7
Promotion of adult learning	2	2	5
Community interaction	1	4	4
Safety for young people		4	5
Community food cupboard and food delivery / circular waste	2	3	4

## 9.2. Specific Feedback Received

Resident 1

*Congratulations for the well thought out and informative local plan document whilst agreeing with all that's said in it I feel the priorities should be on infrastructure everyone I speak to really likes the footpath along the riverside but are dismayed it does not connect with the footpath cycleway along the Seafront is this possible lack of a post office is a big hindrance to a lot of people a shop in castle drive or it's environs could incorporate the post office and the link road to Fort William is a must the road traffic nowadays is diabolical we would be in a lot of trouble if anything ever happened to Nevis bridge thank you for the opportunity to pass comment.*

Kilmallie Community Council

*Kilmallie Community Council represents the area immediately north of Caol and the Kilmallie area shares many of the same issues and facilities as Caol. There are many suggestions in the Caol Local Place Plan that would also benefit Kilmallie and we congratulate Caol CC on the work that has gone into the Plan. We would welcome further collaboration between the community councils on many of the issues identified in the Plan.*

*The Plan notes a lower than anticipated participation in the consultations, possibly as a result of consultation fatigue across the community. This is an issue we recognise in Kilmallie and particularly the lack of action or willingness to engage by Highland Council on previously identified issues. This is a serious discouragement to participation. For the Local Place Plan process to have any chance of success there needs to be a commitment from Highland Council and other public bodies to engage. This commitment needs to follow the principles in the National Standards for Community Engagement that go beyond just consultation and include providing feedback on how community input has influenced outcomes, and working directly with participants throughout any decision making process. The frequent refusal of Highland Council officials to engage has led several Community Councils to resort to freedom of information requests to try to obtain basic information. This is unsatisfactory from everyone's perspective and there needs to be meaningful engagement before there can be progress with Local Place Plans.*

*Many of the challenges identified in the Caol Plan also apply to Kilmallie. A Local Place Plan for Kilmallie could be drawn up based on the issues that have been raised over the last few years, including cuts to bus services, traffic congestion, safe crossings for the A830 at the Banavie swing bridge, lack of bus services and inadequate active travel provision for new housing developments on the Blar Mor. These are all identified within the Plan as issues where people would like to see improvements.*

*We particularly welcome the suggestions for;*

*1. Tackling overall traffic congestion*

*2. Improved bus routes*

*3. Path between Caol and A830 (including High School) across the Blar Mor industrial estate through the current railway underpass. Such a path would greatly reduce the distance for residents in the Blar housing to access facilities in Caol (shops, community centre and primary school). It would also connect residential areas and reduce the isolation of the new houses on the Blar.*

*4. Restoration of the Post Office*

*5. Community growing and access to green space*

*We have concerns about the suggestion for a new roundabout on the A830 at the junction with the B8006. This seems unnecessary additional infrastructure that would increase travel times along the A830 with little advantage for the B8006 traffic. Although this junction can be difficult to exit, this is mainly when traffic is backed up along the A830 and this needs to be addressed through wider measures to reduce congestion.*

*Fort William, Inverlochy & Torlundy Community Council*

*Thank you for emailing the CCC Place Plan, it made interesting reading.*

*We think all the challenges identified are the same issues with our own areas of Claggan, Inverlochy, Torlundy, Plantation, Upper Achintore and those residents of the Town itself. Too many to comment on all.*

*Traffic congestion on the A82, which impacts on the wider area of Lochaber, is a major problem for residents and local business'*

*Commuting locally in the summer months is a nightmare and when accidents occur on the A82, which is fairly frequent and people are caught up in tailbacks around the area for anything from an hour to 4 hours this is extremely problematic, especially for health care workers, doctors, the elderly and young families. This affects the entire Lochaber area.*

*Lack of facilities for young people, for both leisure and sport activities is a huge problem, especially during the holidays. This is particularly problematic for teenagers, and in some cases can lead to acts of vandalism due to boredom.*

*FITCC, CCC and KCC have worked together on the problem of the bus routes to improve the service.*

*Access to and from Lochaber High School is important to FITCC – this is a shared issue also.*

*Post Office – only this week the Post Office on the High Street was closed from Wednesday to Friday!*

*Our only reservation is the proposal for a roundabout at the junction of the A87/B8005 close to the Banavie canal Swing Bridge. We admire the aspiration though we have concerns about how this would alleviate the problem. The traffic entering and leaving Caol is held up by the volume of traffic coming from and going to the A82, this is worsened when the Canal Bridge closes making access and exit even more difficult. We feel that this requires to be addressed as part of the wider measures to reduce traffic congestion throughout the area.*

*Having said that we have paid particular attention to your thoughts on the Caol Link Road corridor and agree that a decision needs to be made on this sooner rather than later, the land set aside could be used for developments to improve the Caol area. There does not appear to be any real prospect of that planned relief road going ahead.*

*Therefore Fort William Inverlochy & Torlundy Community Council wish to advise that we support the Caol CC Local Place Plan.*

Further Consultees

#### Ward 11- Caol and Mallaig

- Andrew Baldrey
- John Grafton
- Liz Siggers

#### Ward 21- Fort William and Ardnamurchan

- Andrew Baxter
- Sarah Fanet
- Thomas Maclennan

## Adjoining Community Councils

- Ardgour CC

We are aware as part of this place plan the above contacts were required to be consulted with, they were contacted in May 2025 and July 2025 and no comment was given.

## 10. Summary and Conclusion

It is recognised that there is considerable consultation fatigue among residents, and a lack of follow-up with tangible outcomes has led to mistrust regarding projects such as this Local Place Plan. Nevertheless, the feedback received throughout this process has been comprehensive and effectively reflects the current priorities and sentiments of the community.

### Key Outcomes

**Strengths Identified:** Active community groups, valued facilities like the community centre and flood scheme walk, regular social events, and efforts to reduce food waste through initiatives like the Community Cupboard.

**Challenges Identified:** Severe traffic congestion, shortage of property for economic growth, insufficient maintenance of parks and public spaces, lack of facilities for youth and vulnerable people, and concerns about safety and security.

**Community Priorities:** Safety and security, access to green space, facilities, and events and social meet-ups.

### Aspirations for the Future

**Infrastructure Improvements:** Addressing traffic congestion through potential changes to the Caol link road corridor, a new roundabout at the A830 exit, enhanced bus routes, improved walking/cycling paths, and additional traffic calming measures.

**Community Facilities:** Better utilization of existing facilities, such as the community centre and youth centre, and development of new amenities like a community garden, green spaces, and a community gym

# Appendix A

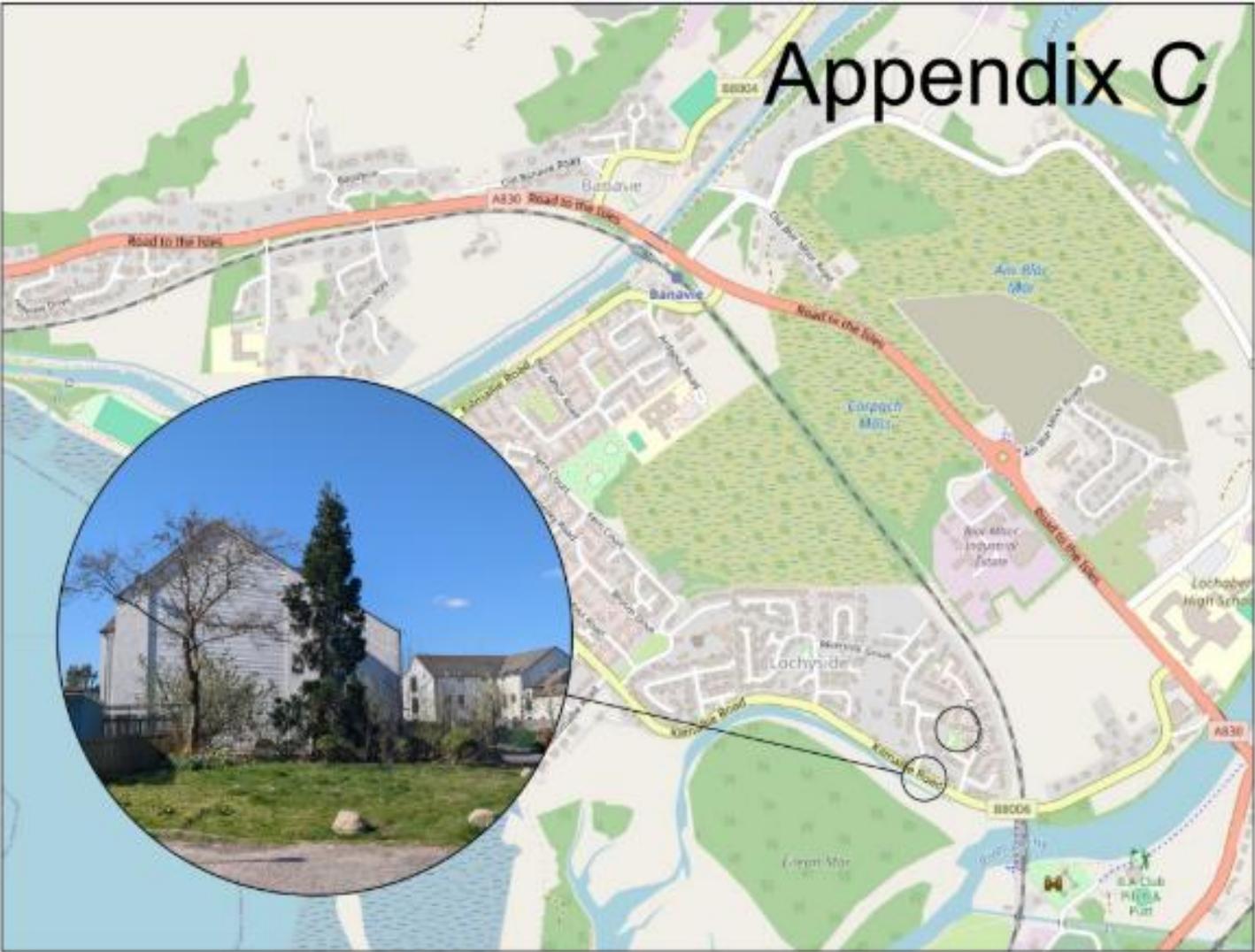


**Appendix B**



**Appendix B**

Appendix C



# Appendix D



# Appendix E



# Appendix F



## Appendix G

