





Executive Summary

Balloch is a village situated on the southern tip of Loch Lomond and as such, is viewed as a southern gateway to the National Park as well as a destination in its own right for day trips and short stays to enjoy the Loch.

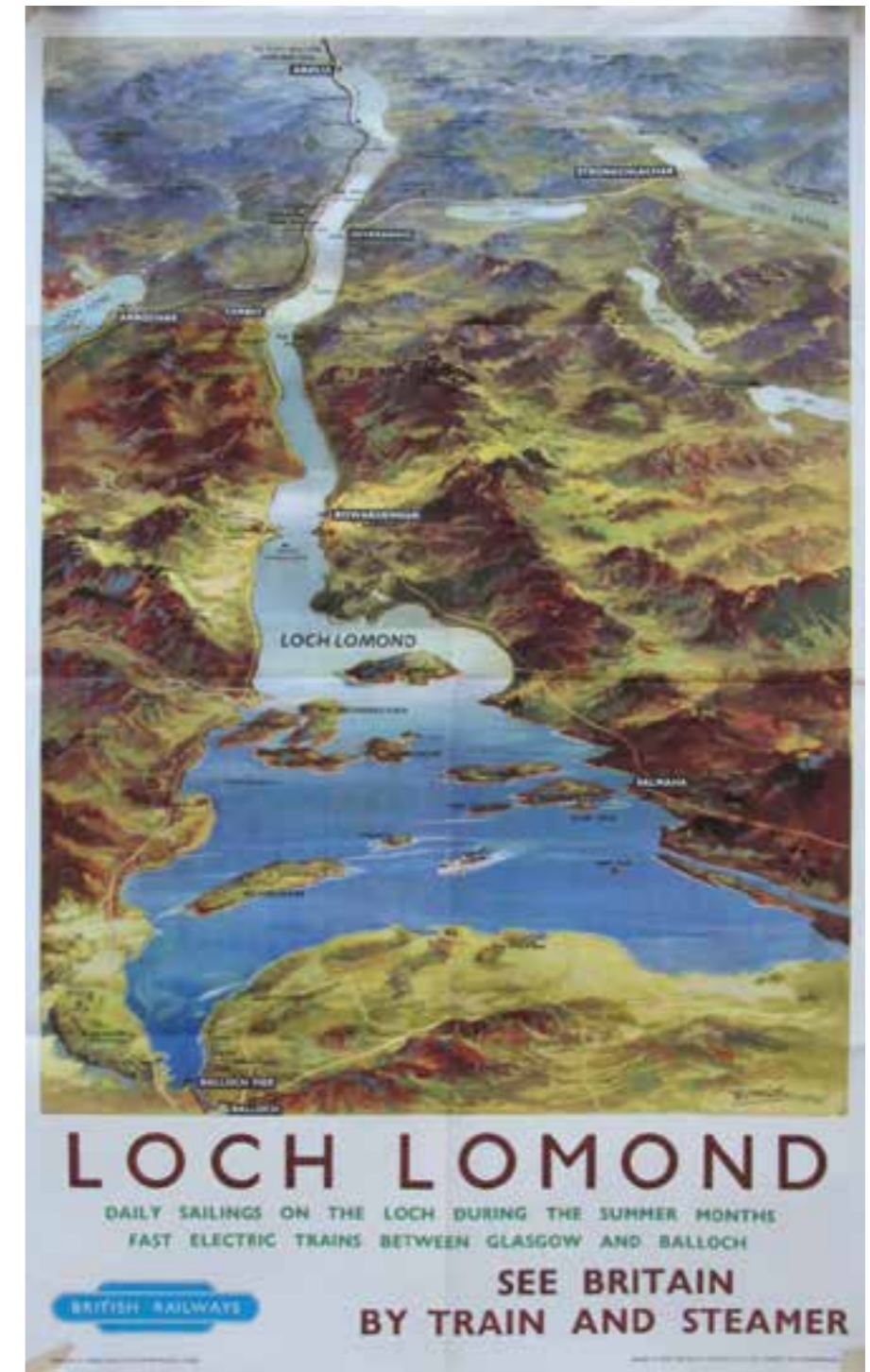
The Loch Lomond and The Trossachs National Park and West Dunbartonshire Council, supported by Scottish Enterprise and the Scottish Government, appointed 7N Architects and Nick Wright Planning to carry out a Charrette in Balloch in March 2016. The purpose of the Charrette was to undertake an appraisal of Balloch in its current state through a series of design-led workshops to identify opportunities for co-ordinated action that can benefit the local community, the visitor economy and make Balloch an even better place.

A series of community design workshops were held at the National Park Headquarters in Balloch, supported by targeted engagement at local schools, local businesses and community group engagement and an active online discussion on the LIVE Park facebook page.

This Charrette Report pulls together the outcome of the Charrette process and sets out a series of indicative proposals and recommendations shaped by the local community that can go forward for use by partners locally to act as a collective action plan for the future of Balloch. It acts as a framework that ensures development in Balloch works best for the village.

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Balloch's idyllic setting, viewed from the South East

The Charrette 01

Balloch's idyllic setting, viewed from the South East

Introduction

Loch Lomond and The Trossachs National Park and West Dunbartonshire Council appointed 7N Architects and Nick Wright Planning to carry out a Charrette in Balloch in February/March 2016.

The purpose of the Charrette was to offer the opportunity to appraise Balloch in its current situation and devise a plan for the future that can make the most of its strengths and opportunities, re-establishing a collective effort to make it a better place.

Balloch is a village located on the southern tip of Loch Lomond, within the National Park and just under an hour north-west of Glasgow. As such, it benefits from setting, proximity and transport links that make it a popular visitor destination, particularly for day-trippers.

The National Park Authority has recently completed a Local Development Plan for the Park, currently at Proposed Examination Stage, to be adopted in 2016 (for more information see www.ourlivepark.com/next-step-for-plan-examination/). The plan identifies key sites with development potential that were considered as key areas of focus for the Charrette from the outset. These are West riverside; Balloch Castle and Woodbank House. Other key areas of focus included the village centre; local connections in and around Balloch and wider connections to the Vale of Leven and north to other parts of the National Park, as indicated in the proposed Local Development Plan (see below).



Key Themes

The conversations about Balloch centred on a number of themes that emerged during pre-Charrette engagement, background evidence gathering and the first community workshop.

Balloch has plenty going for it. A significant location where the central belt meets the National Park, a riverside and lochside setting and local assets such as Balloch Park are key strengths. Making the most of these strengths in a way that is sustainable and sensitive to local landscape and culture is critical to Balloch's long term economic and social health.

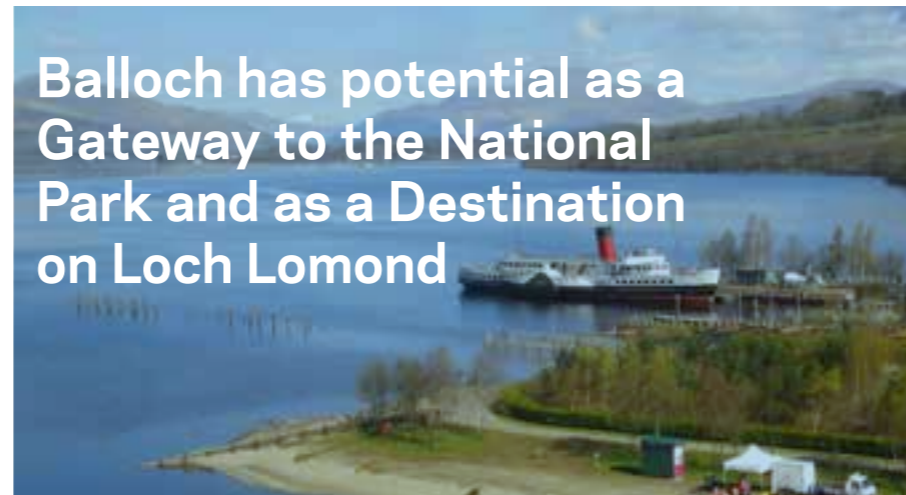
However Balloch could work better for both visitors and locals - more detail of which will be illustrated later in the report. Primary themes that emerged and continued to be raised throughout the Charrette are illustrated to the right.

A common thread that ties all of these together is about quality of experience for both visitors and locals in and around Balloch.

At the outset of the Charrette, it was suggested that arriving at Loch Lomond should be like arriving at Lake Geneva, with its lakeside public realm, mountain backdrop and its iconic fountain attraction. It is clear to see from this statement that the local community recognises the significance of Balloch as an international visitor destination and has the aspirations that the experience on the ground is in line with the natural beauty and drama associated with the 'bonnie banks of Loch Lomond'.



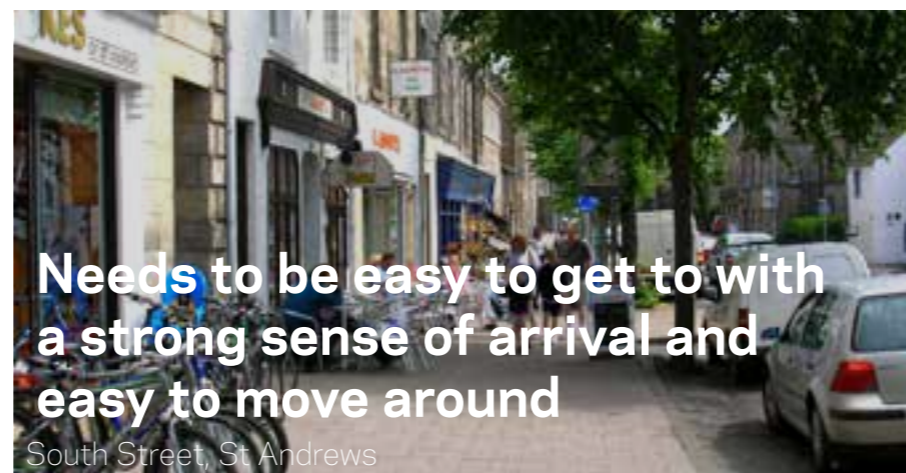
Balloch has potential as a Gateway to the National Park and as a Destination on Loch Lomond



Have all-year round activities for all ages and abilities



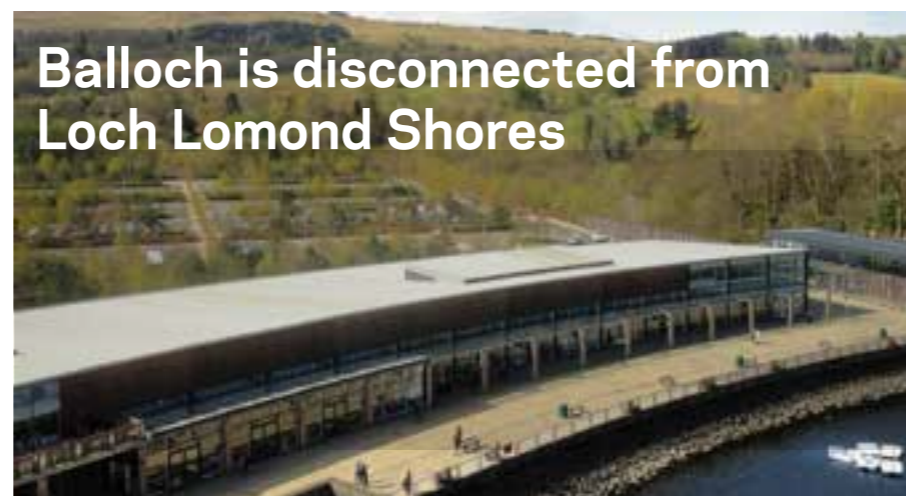
Needs to be easy to get to with a strong sense of arrival and easy to move around



Balloch needs to be a more coordinated village



Balloch is disconnected from Loch Lomond Shores



Balloch Castle and Park are under utilised assets



Key themes that emerged during the Charrette

Balloch - An Overview

Balloch occupies a key point where Glasgow and the settlements along the north bank of the Clyde and the Vale of Leven give way to the open green space of the National Park. Balloch is the last stop on the North Clyde railway line and the first opportunity to step out of your car and take in views of Loch Lomond. As such, it is a village that looks both north to the Park and south to its fellow Vale of Leven communities and beyond.

Gateway to the National Park

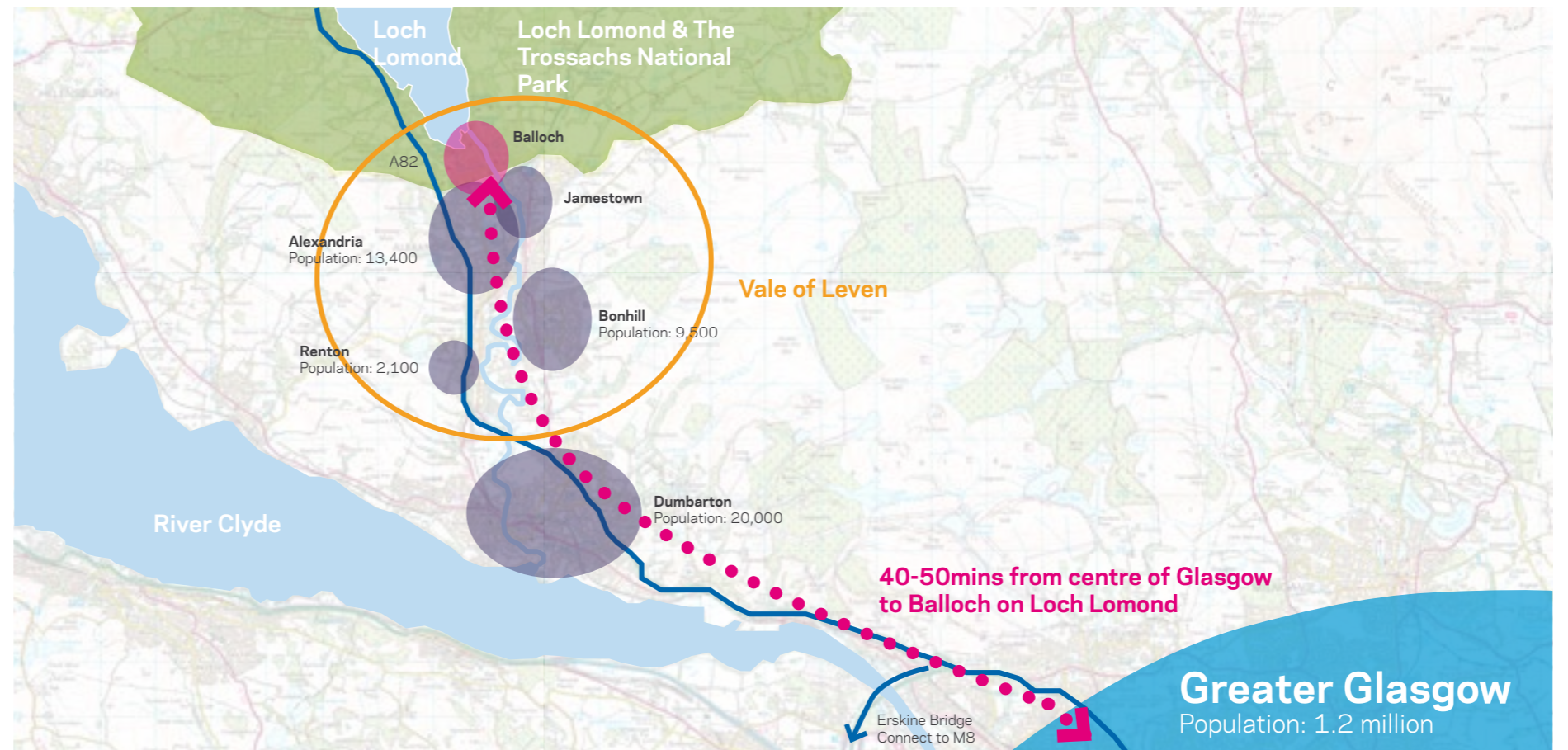
Balloch as a gateway means that people arrive here intending to experience the National Park - either as a series of day trips or as a stopping-off-point as part of a longer trip through the region.

Destination on Loch Lomond

Balloch is an extremely accessible opportunity for a day visit from Scotland's principal urban environments, to enjoy Loch Lomond, its wild landscapes and fresh air. The challenge for Balloch is how to encourage more expenditure from the existing day trip market, either with attractions and activities, or through extending stays to overnight, while managing the effects of a large influx of people in a small place.

A settlement in the Vale

In reality, Balloch merges into Alexandria and Jamestown and on down the Vale, forming a larger urban area. Opportunities for Balloch to develop as a thriving visitor destination with a healthy local economy can help to create a beneficial relationship with the rest of the Vale of Leven, developing skills, jobs and opportunities for improved health.



Balloch, viewed from the south with Loch Lomond in the background

Balloch's Opportunity



Major Attractions and Arrival Points

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The following headline statistics outline the existing visitor market in Balloch and the surrounding area.

- **4.5 million visitors** spend 7.5 million visitor days in the **National Park**
- **Loch Lomond Shores** opened in 2002, coinciding with the formation of Scotland's first National Park and is now ranked as the second most visited free attraction in Scotland with over **1.2 million visitors** each year
- The **Great Scottish Swim** attracts over **10,000 people** to Balloch and the local area
- The Visitor Information Centre in Balloch had **54,500 visitors** in 2015, up on 53,500 in 2014
- The top ranked attraction in Balloch on Trip Advisor is the **Loch Lomond Bird of Prey Centre**, immediately followed by **Balloch Castle Country Park**, ranked no. 6 and 7 of things to do in Loch Lomond and The Trossachs National Park
- **Visitors spend £153.4 million** in the National Park each year

The best way to increase visitor spending is to increase dwell time, with overnight accommodation, an enhanced activity offer and an expanded and improved food and drink provision.

"Balloch is the largest gateway to the National Park. Loch Lomond Shores has been developed as the gateway hub and attracts up to 1.3million visitors every year. It has excellent car parking and should be one of the natural places for an introduction to the Park and the visitor offer should reflect this. Public realm improvements to Balloch and improved tourist facilities will help attract private sector investment to the village. There is an opportunity with the long distance walking and cycling routes around Balloch for it to be a hub for walking and cycling."

[LLTNP Tourism Strategy 2012-2017](#)

Balloch - At a Glance



The Gateway Building



Loch Lomond Shores



Maid of the Loch



Loch Cruises



Space between Train Station & Visitor Information



Village Centre



View towards Loch Lomond Marina/ boat yard



Balloch Park



Balloch Castle



Balloch Park (view to Loch Lomond)



Loch Lomond & The Trossachs NP HQ

Balloch - At a Glance



Pre-Charrette Engagement

The approach to the Charrette engagement was driven by the objective of maximising awareness, attendance and participation of working age people, families and young people in Balloch and the Vale of Leven.

To achieve that objective, the team engaged with a broad range of local school pupils, youth groups, businesses, individual residents, community groups, social enterprises and public agencies using a number of different techniques. The three primary means of engagement were targeted engagement in advance of the Charrette, the Charrette workshops themselves, all supported by an online campaign. An advisory group of key local stakeholders was established to help ensure that the Charrette engagement and communications strategies were as effective as possible.

Pre-Charrette: targeted contact with specific groups

The 2 months leading up to the Charrette (January-February 2016) included visits to:

- o Local schools - Haldane Primary, St Kessogs Primary, Levenvale Primary and Vale of Leven Academy
- o Two local youth groups - Haldane Youth Services and Vale of Leven Youth Voice
- o An elderly people's group (Alzheimer's Scotland support group)
- o Balloch and Haldane Community Council.

In addition a Business Breakfast was organised to provide customer-facing businesses in the village centre and Loch Lomond Shores an opportunity to discuss the future of the village from their perspective. One-to-one discussions were also held with a number of local businesses throughout the public engagement sessions.

These various sessions were useful in identifying future priorities from groups of people whose perspectives might not emerge during evening Charrette workshops. Outputs from these sessions, such as display boards and posters produced by schools, were displayed at the Charrette workshops; and comments and priorities were fed into the workshop discussions and design process.



St Kessog's Primary School Idea Development



Vale of Leven Academy Engagement Session



St Kessog's Primary School Charrette Participants

Pre-Charrette Engagement

Some of the key points which emerged during the pre-Charrette engagement included:

- **Balloch Park**
The importance of Balloch Park to the local population, and an aspiration to make more of it for locals and visitors alike. Also a desire to make more of the Castle, particularly to re-open it to the public for something like a cafe and toilets.
- **Connectivity**
A desire for better connections between Loch Lomond Shores and the village centre - universally requested by businesses and people of all ages.
- **Setting**
Make more of Balloch's position as the gateway to the National Park - partly by providing more activities and improving quality, and also by improving marketing (e.g. renaming the station 'Balloch Loch Lomond').
- **Access**
Ensuring that there is enough car parking at peak times (which can be any sunny weekend throughout the year) and that traffic management in the village still allows customers to access businesses even when there is a major event on.
- **River Management**
Riverbank maintenance, particularly given rising water levels in the winter.
- **Youth Opportunities**
Improve Balloch's offer for children and young people, such as a greater variety of outdoor activities and play opportunities at the Moss O'Balloch and Balloch Park.



Levenvale Primary School Vision



Haldane Youth Services Engagement Session



St Kessog's Primary School Vision



Levenvale Primary Engagement Session

Social Media

In line with the engagement objectives of raising awareness amongst working age people, families and young people in Balloch and the Vale of Leven, a conscious decision was made at the outset to maximise use of social media as a means of engagement. [Facebook.com/ourlivepark](https://www.facebook.com/ourlivepark) was the main focus for activity, supported by the [LivePark](#) blog and [twitter](#) feed.

During the build-up to the Charrette workshops in February 2016, the focus of social media activity was to publicise the upcoming Charrette, provide updates on pre-Charrette engagement activity and to encourage online participation by posing questions about the future of Balloch. Facebook posts were placed almost daily throughout the three weeks leading up to the first Charrette workshop, with a good level of engagement and over 350 comments on posts.

Once the Charrette workshops began, the Facebook page was used to share the presentations and discussions from the evenings workshops. Immediately after the final exhibition on 22 March, the exhibition content was placed online and debate encouraged.

Over 70,000 people were reached through the Facebook page with over 5,500 people 'engaging' by commenting, sharing or liking the page and a 47% increase in followers of the LIVE Park Facebook page during the Charrette period. The platform proved to be successful in spreading the word beyond those able to come to the Charrette workshops to a far larger audience, providing a forum for debate on proposals, the addition of further ideas, and sharing of resources such as old photographs.



Facebook Statistics and Comments

My kid asked for us to go to Balloch the other day. I said what for?? 'Don't know' was the reply. Says it all really.

People flock to Balloch when the weathers fine, however we need to generate an attraction for all the year round interest.

Radical I know, but what about renaming our village "Balloch Loch Lomond" especially aimed at the train station?

It's important to be ambitious and progressive in thinking about opportunities for Balloch.

If it enhances our wee village and brings in employment and more tourism, then it's great for the community.

Charrette Workshops

Charrette workshops were well attended with over 250 people attending the 3 drop-in sessions, 3 workshops and the exhibition session held at the Loch Lomond and The Trossachs National Park Headquarters. The ideas shared and discussed during these sessions, in conjunction with the comments received via social media, formed the foundation for this report.

The Charrette took place over 4 days, spaced apart between 29 February to 22 March 2016. The first three days consisted of daytime drop-in sessions (12pm-2pm) followed by evening workshops (7pm) to maximise public attendance (see below for attendance figures). The workshops combined presentations with group discussions. The final day was run as a staffed exhibition between 12pm and 8pm, with plenty of time for one-to-one discussion. Detailed comments were recorded at each session by the Charrette team and participants through interactive activities, worksheets and post-its.

Over the course of these successive sessions, an agenda for the future of Balloch emerged, followed by initial proposals to translate that agenda into reality, and then testing and refinement of those initial proposals. The Charrette team used the time between sessions to consider comments made at the sessions, research, refine and test emerging proposals.



Balloch Charrette Programme and Visitor Statistics



Workshop Feedback and Ideas



Charrette Engagement Activities



What People Said

During the first Charrette workshop, all feedback was recorded and documented by Charrette participants through interactive activities and group discussions. The collated ideas, criticisms and aspirations have been summarised below.

What Charrette participants stated were the most **liked** aspects of Balloch during the first workshop:

- o Loch Lomond Shores
- o Scenery and access to Loch Lomond
- o Footpath and Cycle Network
- o Train Link to Glasgow and beyond
- o Leisure Cruises and the Water Taxi
- o The Walled Garden
- o Diverse Range of Visitors and Tourists
- o National Park



The John Muir Way, near Balloch



Tired Interpretation Panel, Moss O'Balloch

What Charrette participants outlined as their most **disliked** aspects of Balloch during the first workshop:

- o Condition of Balloch Castle
- o Inadequate Parking and congestion in Village Centre
- o No 'Heart' to the Village and poor sense of arrival
- o Commercialisation of the Loch
- o Poor connectivity to/ from the Loch and Lomond Shores
- o Lack of safe and accessible nighttime activities
- o Poor signage and lighting
- o Lack of Public Conveniences
- o Unsightly Marina/ Boat Yard and river management

What **ideas** Charrette participants came up with during the first workshop:

- o Regeneration of Balloch Castle
- o Diverse activities for all ages and abilities
- o Transport Hub with Coach Trip Connections
- o Enhanced Activities in the Village Centre
- o Maid of the Loch Sailings and Evening River Cruises
- o Pedestrian Bridge to link West riverside to the Balloch Park



'Likes'
Data extracted from workshop feedback sheets



'Dislikes'
Data extracted from workshop feedback sheets

What People Said

Outline proposals discussed during the second Charrette Workshop defined three clear areas of focus within the village. A number of strategic approaches and opportunities were presented using examples that demonstrated a variety of approaches to river and loch-side public realm and village centre enhancements that formed the basis for debate.

Below is a summary of key priorities identified by the community:

East Riverside

- o There is a need to make people aware of Balloch Park and make it easier to get to - by bridge, ferry and/or by making the walk along the shore a nicer experience
- o Linking the village and Balloch Park to Loch Lomond Shores would be a positive thing
- o There should be a broad range of activities and attractions within the park and the castle

West riverside

- o Riverside walkway linking Loch Lomond Shores and the village should be green in character but have day and evening activity along it
- o The Riverside should feel safe and enjoyable in the evening as well as during the day
- o There needs to be better connections between the village, Loch Lomond Shores and Balloch Country Park.

Village Centre

- o Need to create a more people friendly environment
- o There needs to be more parking, and it needs to be better managed and regulated
- o Quality of environment could be improved for the benefit of residents and visitors.



Workshop One Participation © The Daily Record



Charrette Ideas Map

Develop a variety of play spaces for all ages and abilities

Enhance the 'heart' of the Village

Open up views to the River Leven and Loch Lomond

Create an easy to maintain, illuminated walkway along the riverside

Provide extra parking for cars and coaches within the Village Centre

Advertise Balloch as a hub for activities i.e for hiking, kayaking and cycling

Second Workshop Ideas

What People Said

During the third Charrette workshop, those present were asked to comment on a presentation of key proposals/priorities that emerged from the first workshop session.

We received lots of feedback (approx. 245 post-its) and the following is a summary of issues identified and ideas generated during this session.

1. Moving Around

Improving connectivity between the village and surrounding assets was seen as a key priority for Balloch, with wider connections to national walking and cycling routes seen as a great opportunity to define Balloch as an activity hub.

- o Better connection to the NCN7, the Three Lochs Way and the John Muir Way with showers and lockers for bikes and hikers
- o Establish clear arrival points with good signage and maps
- o Create better links between Loch Lomond Shores, the village and Balloch Park

2. Riverside Walkway

There was lots of positivity towards the riverside walkway proposals. It was pointed out that there is a need to consider the design and management to deal with anti-social behaviour and a lack of security along both riverbanks, bank erosion and the

public impact of development of the Scottish Enterprise land.

- o Ensure public access is maintained along both riverbanks
- o Improve flood protection along banks
- o Ensure that the area is safe both day and night with accessible surfaces and good lighting
- o Build new pavilions to provide opportunities for local businesses, cafés, clubs and community use

3. Balloch Park

It was clear that the park is much loved by visitors and residents, however concerns over flooding, the condition of paths and a lack of formal activities were highlighted as priorities for improvement, with a desire to improve signage and interpretation.

- o Improve pedestrian and cycle routes and access to the shore
- o A more diverse range of day and night events with ranger led activity throughout the park
- o Improve facilities to include Camping, a new attraction like a giant slide and a function space for weddings and concerts

4. The Castle

Indicated as a key area for improvement, ideas for the building principally focussed on external improvements with a long term strategy for establishing a flexible, community focused function.

- o Temporary exhibition space for items from Glasgow museums
- o Create a café, shop and toilets to improve visitor experience

5. The Bridge

The Bridge proposal stimulated the most debate during the workshop - some saw it as an ambitious long-term aim that would improve connectivity between major attractions while providing an icon for the village and others saw it as a waste of money that would isolate the village centre.

6. Village Environment

An enhanced Public Realm was seen as paramount for enhancing the village centre, alongside a reduction in traffic and on-street parking.

- o Upgrade public realm between the shops and Pier Road to include iconic lighting, upgraded shopfronts, no 'pod' public toilets and flexible spaces for community seasonal events
- o Establish 'Balloch in Bloom' with hanging baskets and planters

7. Moss O'Balloch

The condition of the Moss O'Balloch was raised, with drainage, tree maintenance, flower planting and a more diverse range of accessible play areas and community activities identified as key areas for improvement.

- o Location for village centre concerts and seasonal activities
- o Establish a flagship playground for all ages
- o Create more parking for visitors and locals

8. Parking

Parking facilities for residents, visitors, commuters and coaches were highlighted as a significant issue within Balloch, with a lack of parking enforcement along Balloch Road causing frequent traffic problems within the village centre.

- o More Parking for Visitors, Commuters and Coaches
- o Develop a strategy for event parking within the village
- o Ensure that parking restrictions are enforced

'Balloch is not a gateway - it is a destination'

'We need to advertise Balloch as an activity hub'

'We must work in conjunction with what's happening on the Scottish Enterprise sites'

The Big Picture

The Big Picture

Balloch is not simply a gateway, it is a destination with a great opportunity to develop a quantity, quality and variety of accommodation, visitor attractions and activities to enhance the village offer while providing opportunities and jobs for the region.

The Brown Sign Session

Throughout all three workshops material from previous sessions was displayed and referred to in presentations and discussions.

The Brown Sign Session in the first workshop invited participants to reinterpret the existing Tourist Sign displayed on the A82 based on their vision for the village.

This initial exercise highlighted an appreciation of Balloch's existing assets and a desire to exploit them to encourage more visitors to the area as a whole, with particular emphasis on enhancing Loch based activity, improving the castle and developing a better visitor servicing offer.

Reflecting on initial exercises at the end of the workshop process, it is clear to see that these priorities have remained consistent and the challenge presented to the design team during the public workshops was how to accommodate and facilitate these ambitions within the existing fabric of the village.

All of the ideas discussed and generated during the workshop were integrated into developing proposals for inclusion in the final exhibition session that formed the basis of the design ideas presented in the next section of the report.





The banks of Loch Lomond and the Maid of the Loch

Charrette Proposals 02



Key Principles

Central to proposals are these overall principles:

- **Generate activity** – more things to do for locals and visitors alike.
- **Create new opportunities** – for employment and recreation for people of all ages from Balloch and the Vale of Leven.
- **Improve connections** – between arrival points, the village centre, Loch Lomond Shores and Balloch Park.
- **Open up views** – of the river, the loch and the mountains.
- **Create quality** – making sure that the Balloch experience is second to none.



Improved activities for all ages and abilities



Enhanced offer for locals and visitors alike



Seasonal activities throughout the Village

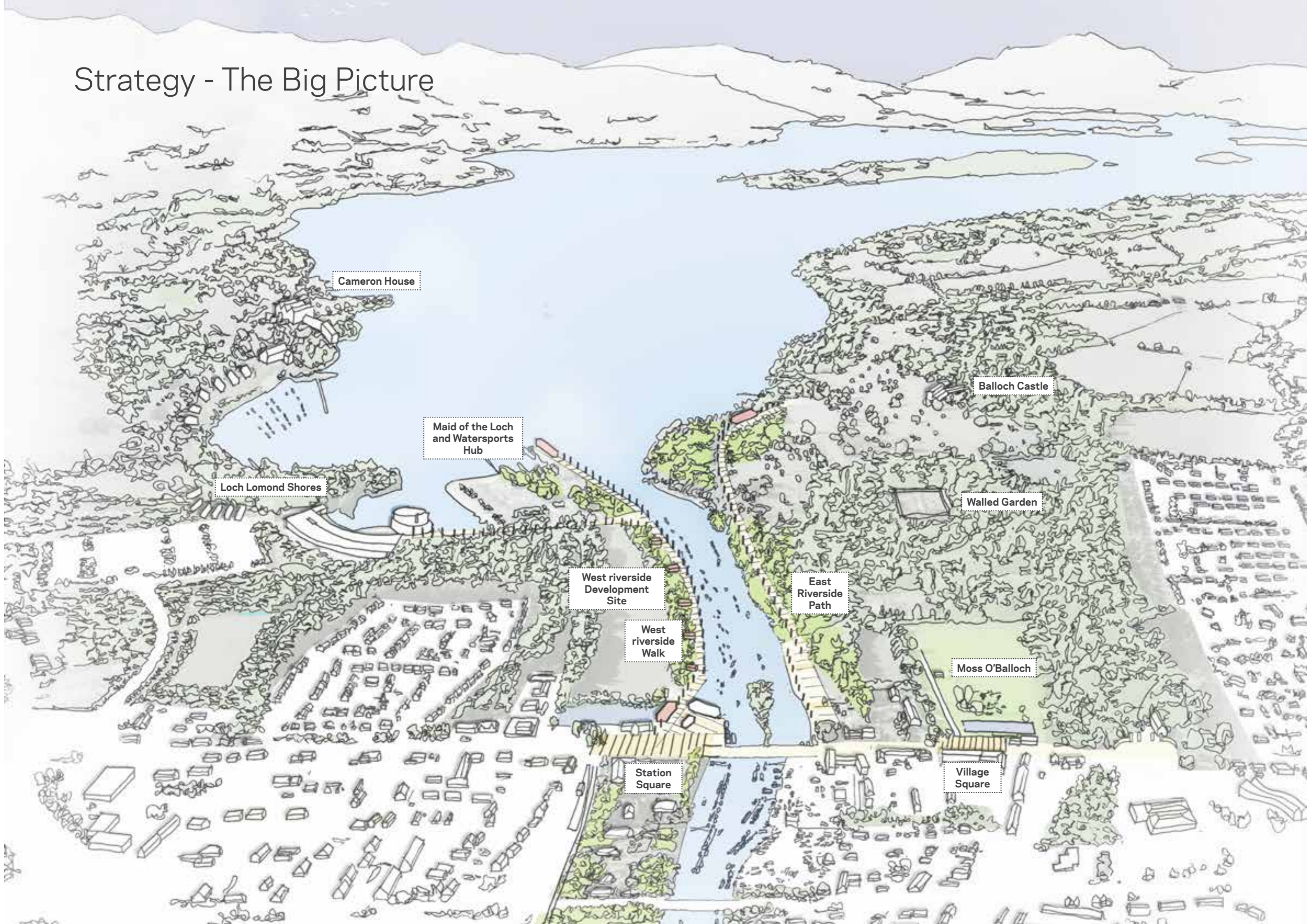


Defined and memorable waterfront space

Balloch Vision



Strategy - The Big Picture



Strategy - The Big Picture

The 'big picture' is a holistic vision for the future of Balloch - it is the picture on the front of the jigsaw box which captures the vision and guides future initiatives.

It is vital to establish this to ensure that all of the pieces that individual groups and organisations work on over the next months and years fit together to make this picture. This means that collective effort and money spent will take Balloch in the right direction. The big picture shown on the previous page has been drawn using everything that was discussed during the Charrette, building on things that are great about Balloch, addressing things that don't work so well, and using some of the great ideas suggested during the workshops and online. This is Balloch's plan for the future.

It is clear that there needs to be a joined up strategy for Balloch to allow it to make the most of its strengths and realise its full potential as a fantastic place to live and work in and visit.

The principles highlighted below underline the elements of the vision outlined below. In essence, it is about creating a well connected, active and attractive place that is enjoyable to spend time in for visitors and locals alike.

Key Principles

- o Generate activity
- o Create new opportunities
- o Improve connections
- o Open up views
- o Create quality

West riverside Walk

- o Strong connection between village, pier and Loch Lomond Shores
- o Riverside walkway - visible, well lit and safe
- o Active at all times of day and evening, with kiosks for cafe, bike hire etc.

Pier End

- o Cluster of visitor and community facing facilities including the refurbished Maid of the Loch, pierside cafe and shared facilities for local watersports clubs.

East Riverside Path

- o Improve access to Balloch Park and create a higher quality experience of walking, particularly along the water's edge

Balloch Castle and Park

- o A viable and sustainable use for Balloch Castle that provides public facing facilities for visitors to the park and the community.
- o More use of the park for outdoor activities for all ages

Station Square

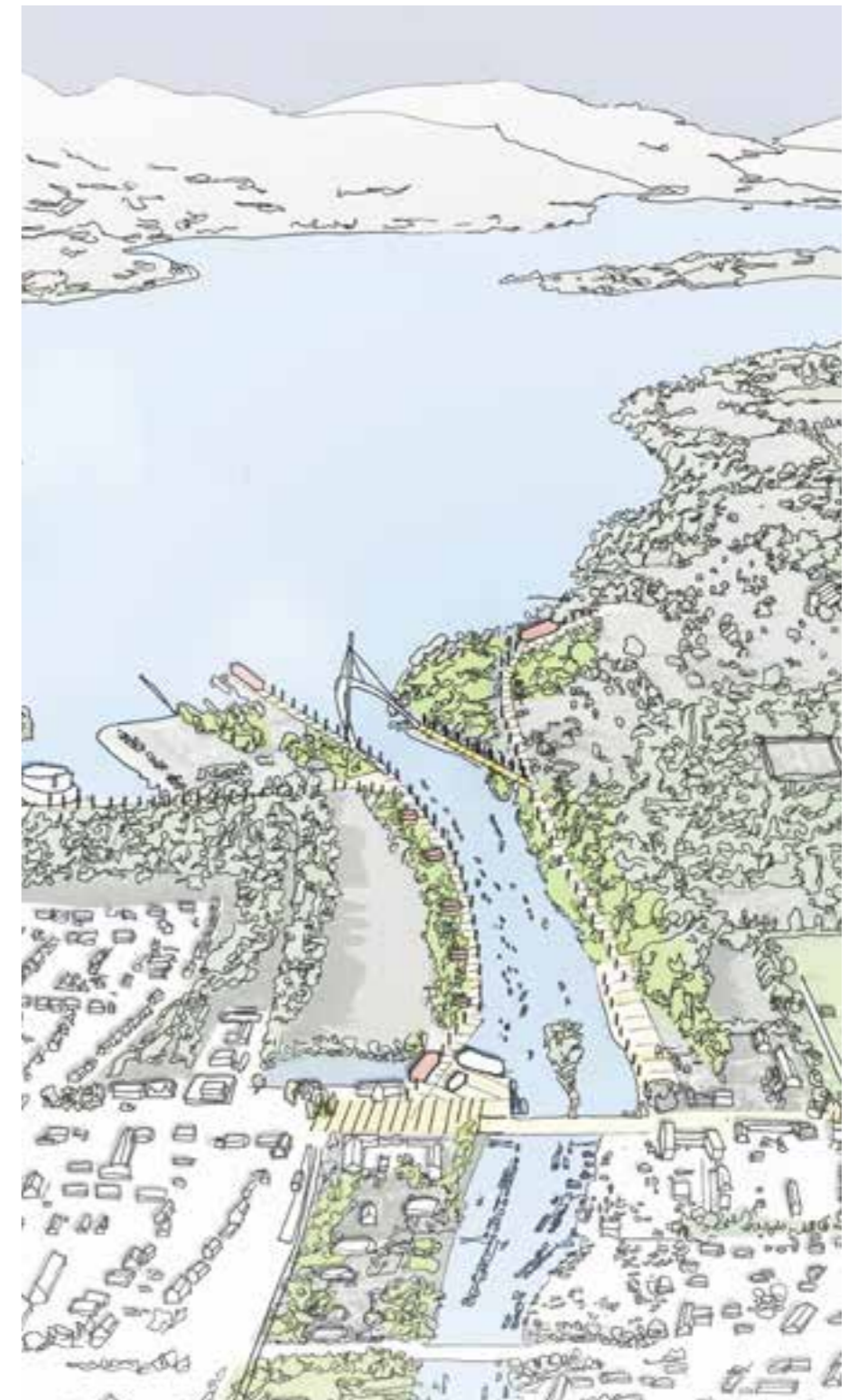
- o Strong sense of arrival in Balloch for visitors centred on train station and visitor information and facilities

Village Square

- o Reinforced feeling of a village centre with space that is actively used by village businesses
- o Outdoor eating, events and markets to animate the space and give people a reason to spend time in the village.
- o Moss O' Balloch can work harder to support the village with recreation and parking facilities.

Connectivity

- o Improved connection between key transport nodes, village attractions and to peripheral attractions such as Cameron House.



Strategy - Connections

One of the major themes highlighted during the Charrette was the poor quality of connectivity between different places in Balloch.

People arriving at Loch Lomond Shores don't necessarily visit the village, despite it being only ten minutes walk away. People visiting the village may not even realise that Balloch Park is there for a walk and a picnic. This heightens problems with parking, as the perception is that Balloch's attractions are far away from each other. A strategic view needs to be taken and implemented on the ground in the form of enhanced facilities at key points, clear and accessible information and effective signage and wayfinding.

The major attractions in Balloch are Loch Lomond Shores, the village and Balloch Park. Along the shore there is Cameron House, and in the future there will be the west riverside development.

Key arrival points for these places are shown on the plan overleaf; these points should have parking facilities, toilets, wayfinding and information. The emphasis should then be about creating an environment in between these points that encourages movement on foot and on bicycle - with the option of a shuttle bus for sightseeing, for those who are less mobile and for people who need to move quickly from A to B. It is important that the experience of moving between places on foot or on bicycle should be enjoyable, comfortable and animated along the way with lots of things to see and do, serviced with facilities to make it practical for locals and visitors alike.



Space in front of the Visitor Information Centre



Existing East Riverside Path



Balloch Park



Arrival Point: The Station and Visitor Information Centre

Strategy - Connections



A New Bridge?



A New Bridge?

The idea of a new bridge popped up early on in the Charrette process and generated some debate during the workshops and online. It is by no means a new idea and it is an obvious one to anyone who has walked from Balloch Castle to Loch Lomond Shores and back again.

The opportunity is that this could be something iconic that attracts international attention, a beautiful pedestrian and cycle bridge and platform offering spectacular views of Loch Lomond. It could be a key stopping point for the national cycle route passing through Balloch, the place where people stop to take a photograph to broadcast to the world.

The design challenges are numerous; the banks of the river are subject to erosion and flooding, there is a scheduled ancient monument to consider, it would need to be high enough to allow loch cruise boats to pass underneath and there would need to be a coordinated effort to ensure that this route would be viewed as a loop including the village, rather than as a means of avoiding it.

While a bridge would be controversial and could be challenging, it is a big and aspirational idea that should stay on the table as something that would be a significant attraction and resource for Balloch. However, it is a long term ambition, not an essential part of the strategy moving forward. There is plenty to be achieved first in the village and along both sides of the river.

What should happen?

- o A new bridge near river mouth to create a viewpoint and loop walk between Loch Lomond Shores, Balloch Park and village centre.
- o If a bridge is not feasible, investigate the possibilities of running a seasonal ferry service instead.
- o See the 'Making it Happen' section for who should lead and who should support in manifesting these ideas.



Langkawi Skybridge, Malaysia



Trollstigen Scenic Route, Norway

Strategy - Wider connections



Strategy - Wider Connections

Balloch's at the heart of local and national routes, linking Inverness to Sunderland via the NCR7 and Inveruglas to Dunbar via the Three Lochs and John Muir Ways, yet signage, maps and information connecting the village with these popular routes is hard to come by. It is clear that Balloch has huge potential for establishing itself as a key stop along the way, servicing walkers and cyclists with nourishment, rest or a ride home via a practical public transport network.

Parking and Drop-off

Convenient departure points are a vital aspect for servicing walkers and cyclists. Balloch's apparent lack of adequate parking for locals and visitors renders it impractical for kit-heavy activities such as long-distance hiking and cycling. Long and medium stay parking solutions or drop-off points within close proximity to activity route departure points will be vital for attracting regular visitors.

Information and Facilities

Simple, practical information indicating location of and distance to cafés, shops and restaurants is vital for encouraging fatigued walkers and cyclists to venture into Balloch, while lockers, bike-parking and showers could help redefine the village as an ideal departure and arrival point. This should be interwoven into a village-wide wayfinding strategy and accompanied by freely-accessible walking and cycling route maps.

Activity Hubs

Two of Balloch's historic assets are strategically located for access to the activity routes that pass thorough the village. Both Woodbank House and Balloch Castle (these will be discussed in more detail later in this report) provide long-term challenges for reactivation and renovation, however strategic development in the form of cafés, parking and public information around these two buildings, focussed on enhancing facilities for cyclists and walkers, could have an instant impact in redefining Balloch as a practical, accessible and well serviced activity hub.



West riverside Strategy

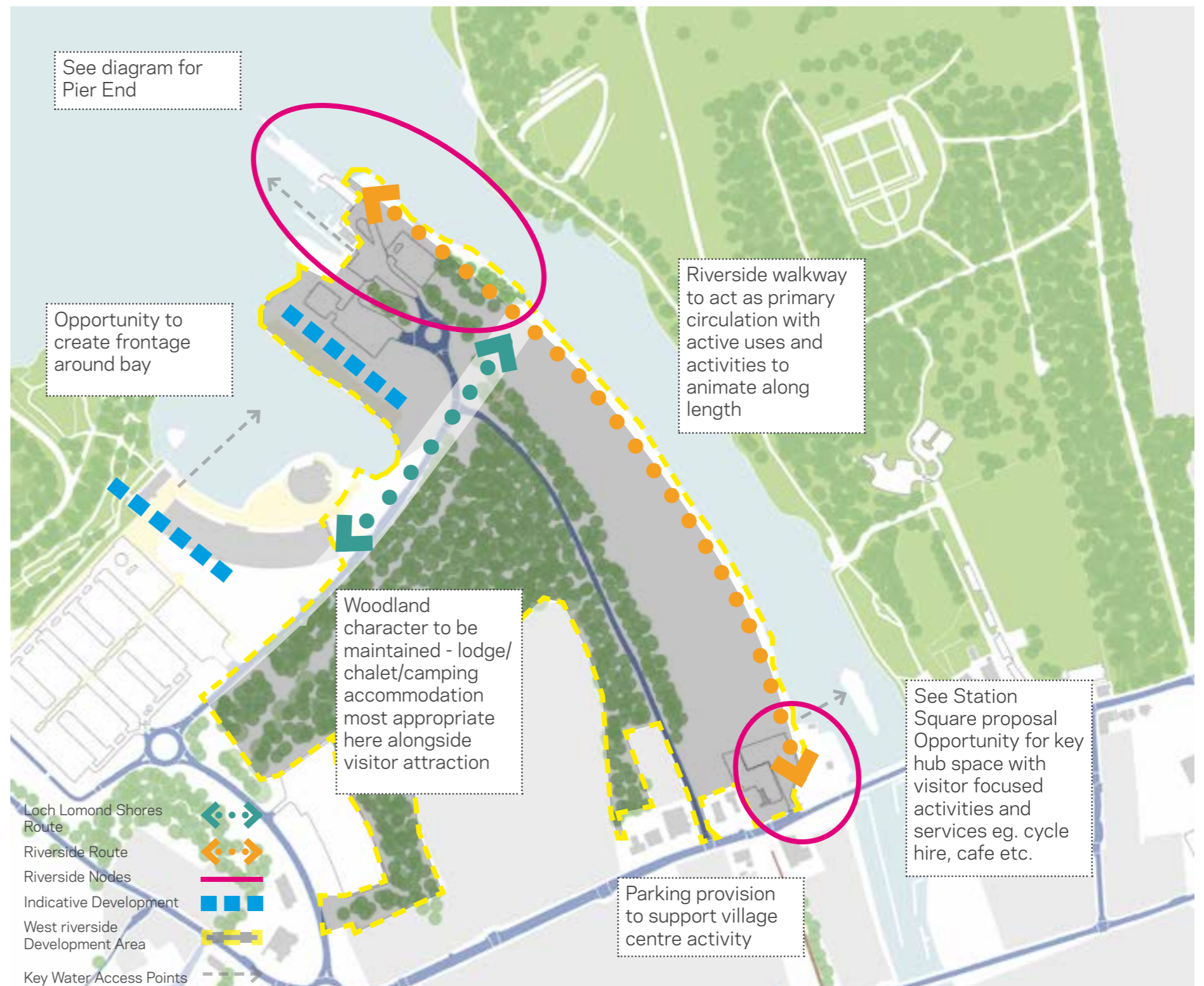
The area along Pier Road and the River Leven, linking the village centre, Balloch Pier and Loch Lomond Shores, could work much better for the village. Many people have said that the connections between these places need to be improved.

Scottish Enterprise owns much of the land and wishes to redevelop it for visitor accommodation, adventure activity, restaurant and retail. At Balloch Pier, Loch Lomond Steamship Company plans to get the 'Maid of the Loch' sailing again and build a visitor centre, and Loch Lomond Water Sports Association wants to build an activity centre for various water sports.

A riverside walkway that is active, visible and enjoyable to spend time walking along will provide a strong linking element for the pier, Loch Lomond Shores, Scottish Enterprise development and the village. It will become a distinctive part of Balloch and make much more of its riverside setting.

What should happen?

- o An enhanced riverside walkway connecting village centre, Balloch Pier and Loch Lomond Shores.
- o Integration of existing routes: River Leven towpath, John Muir Way, Three Lochs Way and via Loch Lomond Shores to Cameron House.
- o Develop guidelines for redeveloping pier area for Maid of the Loch operations and new water sports centre
- o Open up views of the river and loch, integrate facilities, improve pedestrian connections to village centre and Loch Lomond Shores.
- o Define guidelines for development to rear of riverside walkway: create opportunities for eating, drinking and outdoor activity to improve Balloch's offer and choice, connect rather than divide village centre and Loch Lomond Shores, maximise access for visitors and residents.
- o Put in place measures to reduce erosion of river banks.
- o See the 'Making it Happen' section for who should lead and who should support in manifesting these ideas.



West riverside

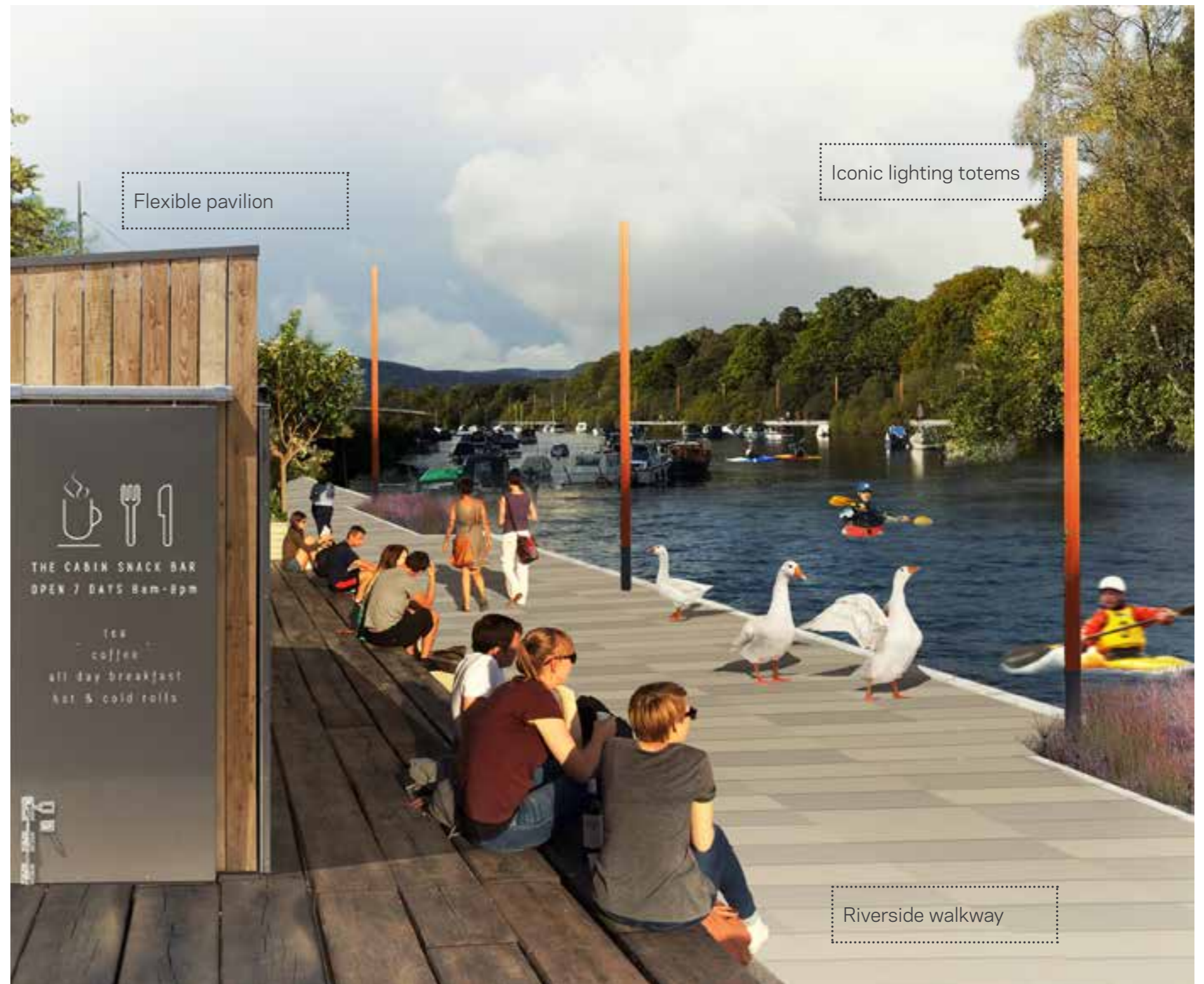
A strong link connecting the village, the West riverside site, the pier and Loch Lomond Shores is of critical importance for Balloch. The opportunity is that a generous, active and well used walkway along the river can become synonymous with Balloch and an attraction in itself.

An illustration of how it might look is shown here. It incorporates a number of key aspects that are important to its success.

- o The walkway is on the water's edge
- o It is generous and visible from the bridge through Balloch
- o It is animated by small scale pavilion buildings providing accommodation for a range of uses
- o There is opportunity for integrated art installations, seating and play areas
- o Trees are maintained in pockets and clusters but the primary aim is to reveal views of the river and the Loch
- o Wayfinding and lighting is an integral part of the design and relates back to a Balloch wide strategy



Existing Riverside Path



West Riverside Vision

West riverside Walk



Windermere Shore



Pop-up Café



Secure Kiosk



Dumfries Pavilion



Parkland Café

Pier End

The pier end has a dual personality, functioning as a public slipway and as part of the visitor experience of Balloch. This will become more acute when the Maid of the Loch is refurbished and proposed pier facilities realised.

This area requires a collaborative approach from all parties concerned and a fresh look at how it functions for a wide range of people.

- o Parking should be rationalised and where possible, visual impact should be reduced eg. with removal of roundabouts and more linear layouts with tree planting
- o Views out toward the water should be maximised
- o Facilities for watersports and Maid of the Loch should be co-ordinated. A cafe in this location will only work if it is carefully designed as an attraction in itself and consideration should be given to year round viability.



Prioritise views of the Loch from within the site



All Weather Seating

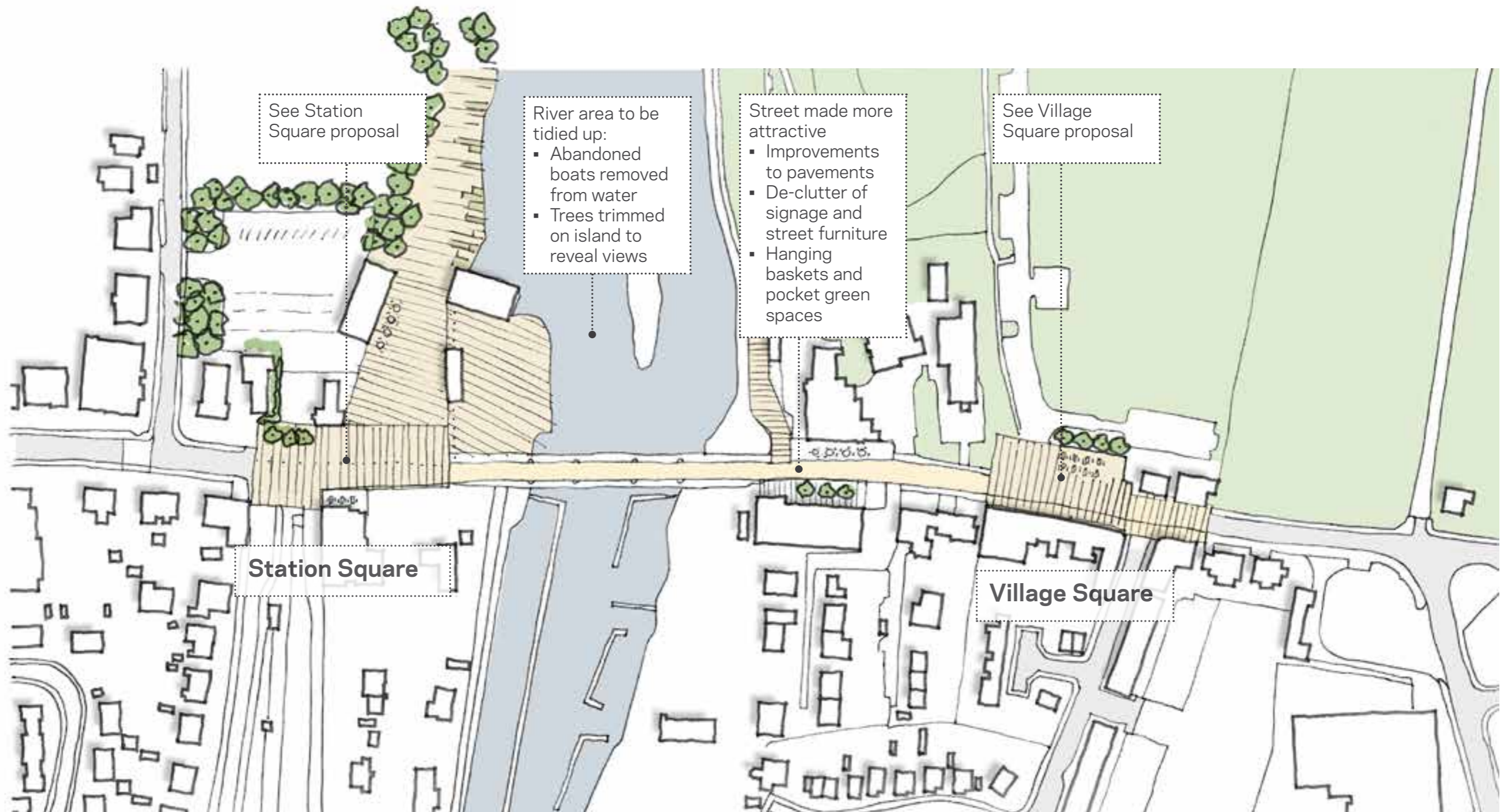


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Framed View Waterside Café

Village Centre



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Village Centre

Design principles for the village centre

The village centre should be people friendly - it should be an enjoyable place to spend time in and move around. It should be easy and safe to cross the road and pleasant to walk along the pavements.

The village centre should be active - there should be plenty to see and do, be it local shopping, eating indoor and out, or attending events.

The village centre should feature a high quality approach to the physical environment, keeping in mind that it is a critical visitor destination and gateway hub for Loch Lomond and the National Park.

How to get there

De-clutter

- o Tidy up - remove obstacles from pavements and indicate clear zones for signage etc.
- o Evaluate signage - remove where unnecessary and replace with co-ordinated and multipurpose signs. There should be a visual consistency throughout Balloch
- o Remove pedestrian barriers where possible/ paint remaining
- o Evaluate need for street furniture - will one bin suffice? etc
- o Don't forget the river - reduce trees density on monkey island and tidy up abandoned boats.

Re-think

- o Test widening pavements with limited short stay/loading parking
- o Provide more generous crossing points relating to the proposed squares.
- o Village square pilot project - remove/relocate fixed street furniture and create event/seating space

Re-create

Following the testing of options, implement a public realm improvement initiative that pulls together the key principles above and an approach illustrated by the sketches shown here and informed by the outcome of testing.

The village centre and Moss O'Balloch are the heart of the village and an important arrival point for visitors by rail and car.

We want to improve the area's character, make it work as a hub for activity and exploration, and create spaces that can be used to meet your friends or host events.

What should happen?

- o Two new civic spaces: Station Square between the railway station and Sweeneys boat yard, and the Village Square at the entrance to Moss O'Balloch
- o High quality 'public realm' in village centre: pedestrian-friendly shared surface, not pedestrianised!
- o Moss O'Balloch: improve walking routes, play park, events space / drainage and parking
- o Rename the railway station: Balloch Loch Lomond
- o See the 'Making it Happen' section for who should lead and who should support in manifesting these ideas.



Test ideas and approaches as a low cost way to see what works?



Renamed and rebranded station?

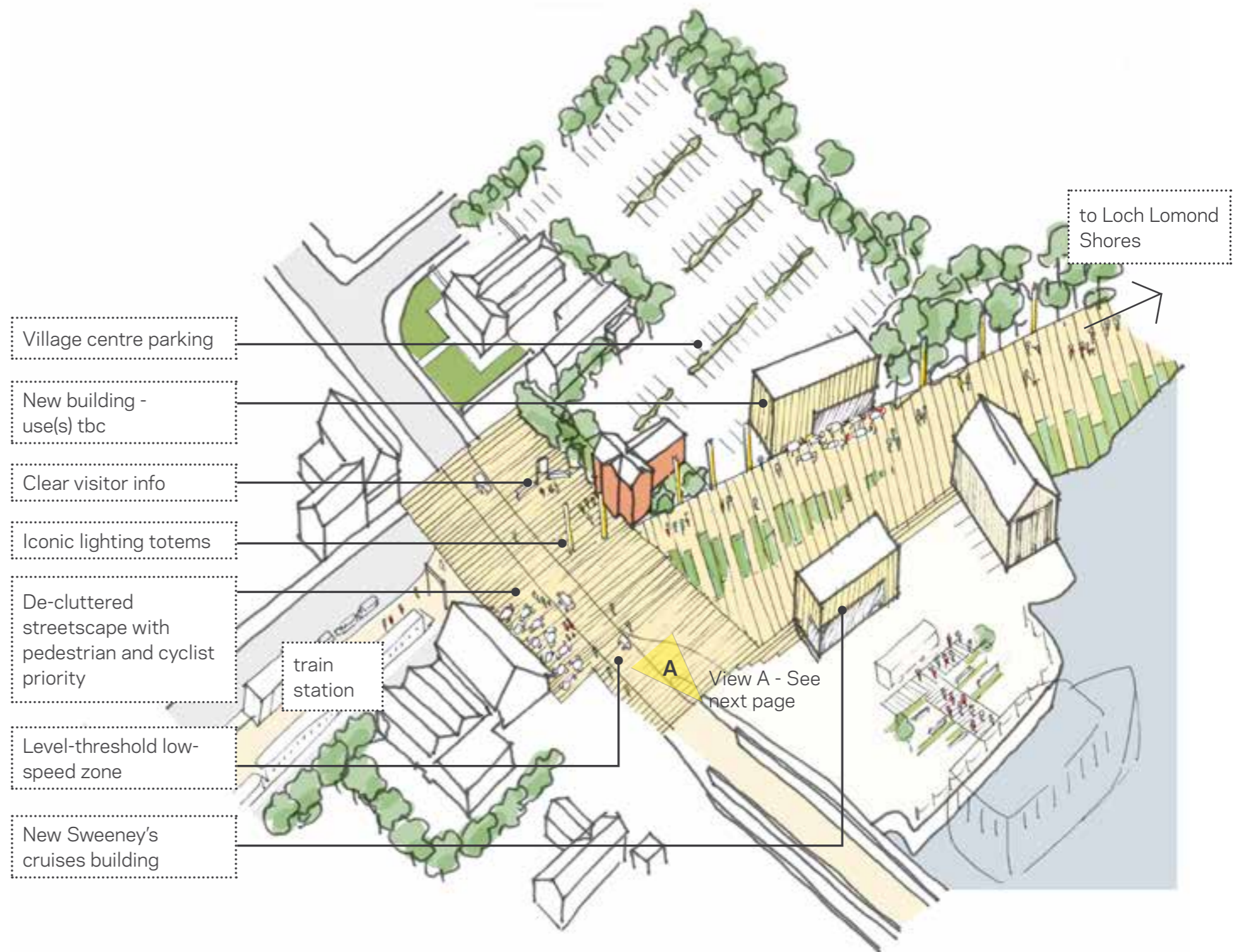


Reinstate Balloch's pedestrian friendly shared surface?

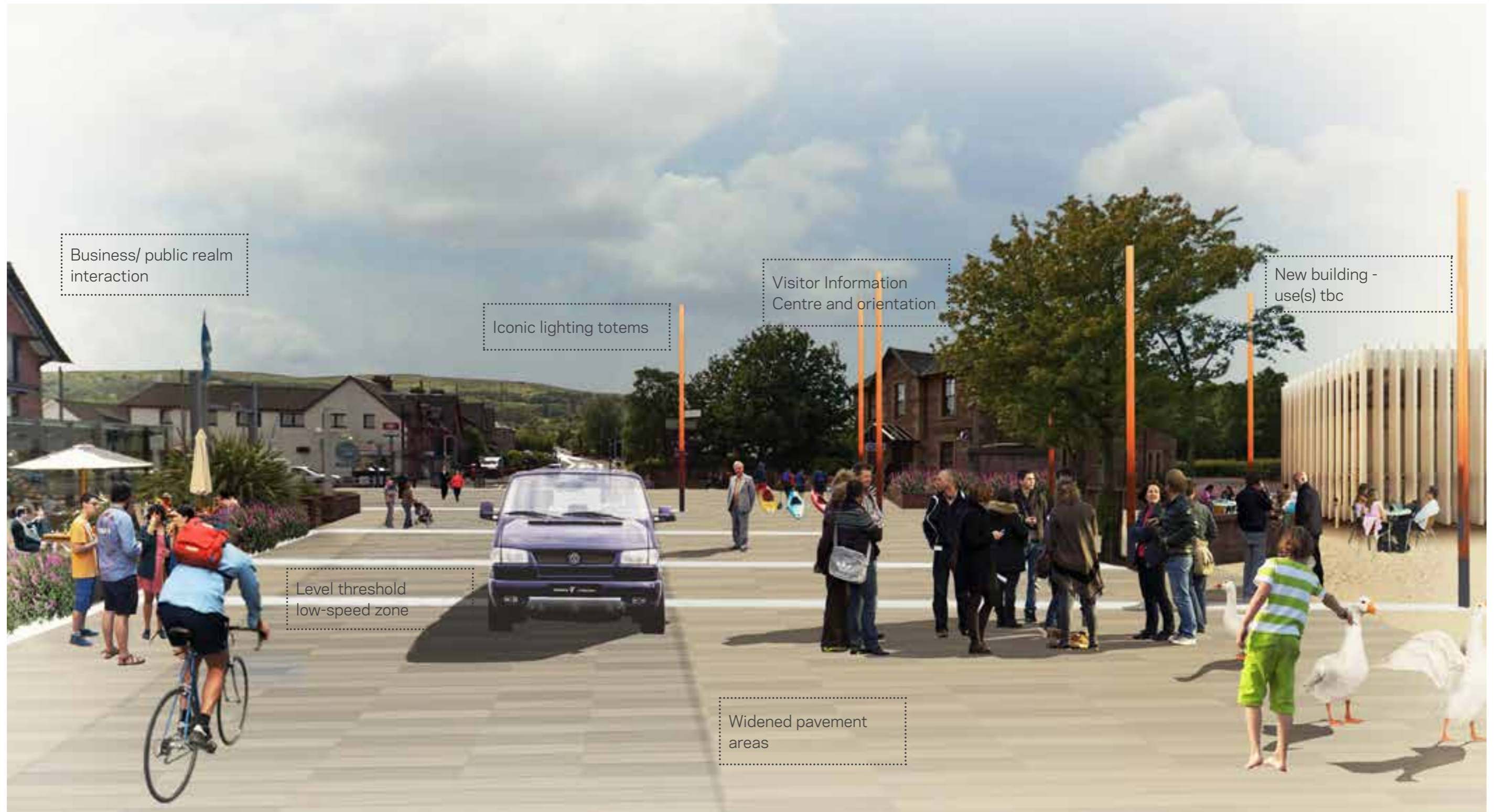
Village Centre - The Station Square

The proposal for 'Station Square' seeks to make the most of this important space and create a strong sense of arrival for visitors to Balloch and to the National Park. This space should be an enjoyable space to spend time in and act as a springboard for exploration of Balloch, west riverside and the surrounding area.

- o The Visitor Information Centre, located in the old station building is central to the space and acts as an anchor for the square and the start of the west riverside walk.
- o A public realm scheme to be developed to clearly demarcate the space and change the character from a carriageway with pavements to a square that vehicles can pass through. Many people during the Charrette mentioned Helensburgh's Colquhoun Square as a good example of this type of approach, but with things that can be improved upon in terms of safety and vehicle management.
- o New buildings create frontage and activity on the start of riverside walk. Uses for these buildings could include Sweeney's Cruises facilities, a ground floor cafe and bike hire and upper floor, budget visitor accommodation. The key aspect of this is to create a sense of enclosure, occupied by ground floor activity, whilst defining a gateway to the west riverside walk.
- o Strong wayfinding and visitor orientation that is simple to use, attractive and helps to define an identity for the village. Lighting and street furniture should all tie in to a co-ordinated approach, avoiding visual clutter.
- o Parking is easily accessible but largely hidden from view from the square



Village Centre - The Station Square View A



Station Square Vision (View A - see map on previous page)

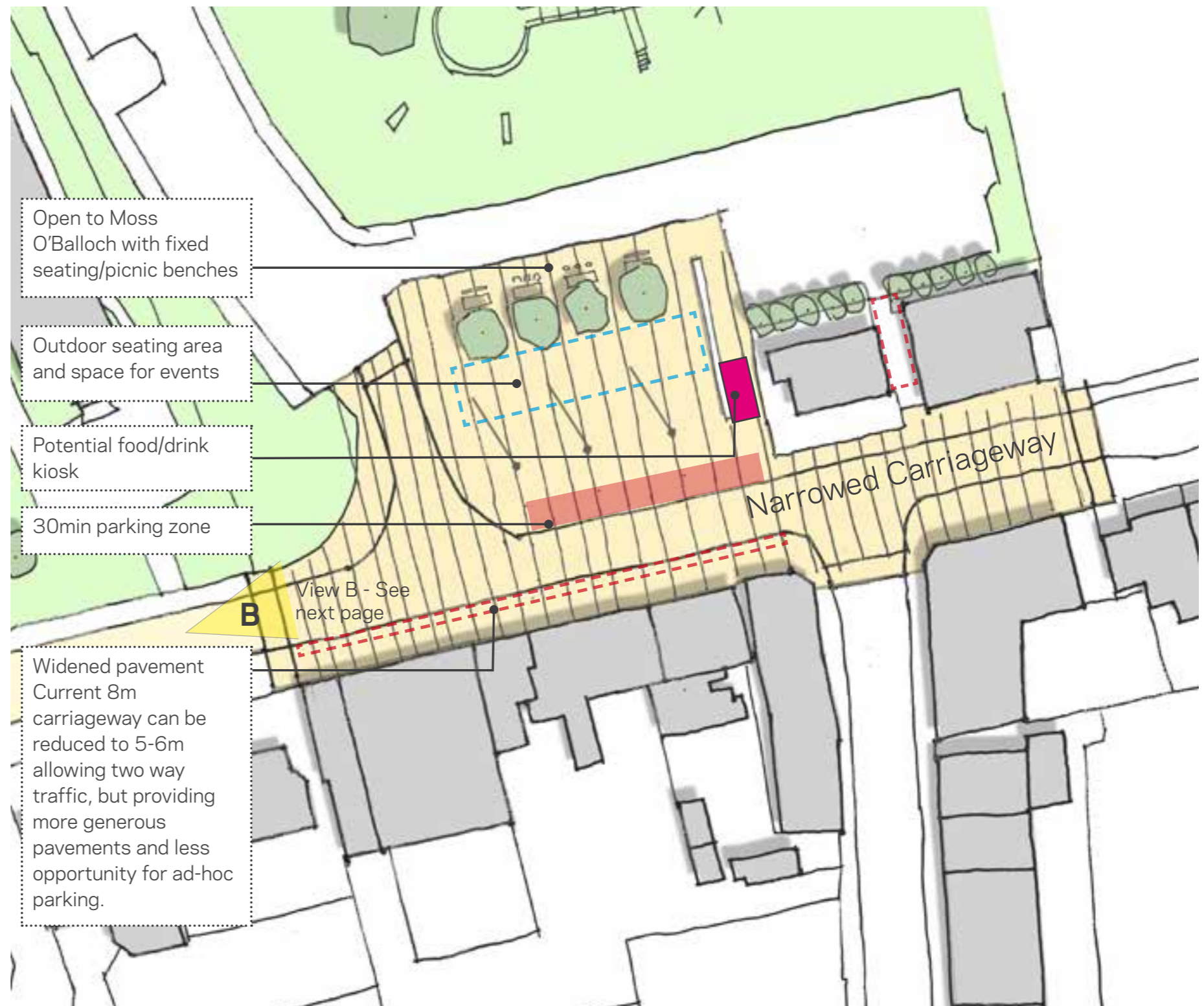
Village Centre - The Village Square

The proposal for the 'Village Square' is about making more of the space in front of the Moss O' Balloch as a space that feels like an active centre of the village. There is an opportunity for local businesses here to make more use of this space, as well as local community groups.

- o Similarly to Station Square, a public realm scheme to be developed that clearly demarcates the space and changes the character from a road and pavements to a square that vehicles can pass through. Two way traffic to be maintained and a solution to short stay parking/loading to be incorporated.
- o Localised narrowing of the road allows more pavement space in front of shops/cafes and take-aways - this can be used for cycle parking/seating/planting.
- o A dedicated space for outdoor seating with temporary rain cover and patio heaters, or for market stalls, should be incorporated to encourage activity and use of the square
- o Removal of the wall between the existing square area and the Moss O' Balloch with the provision of picnic benches to create activity within the village square and provide the opportunity for families to make more use of the play park.

I think there are some really good ideas here. I like the level-threshold low speed zones especially if there will be no parking (except for business deliveries) in the civic spaces and only in the improved and expanded parking areas.

Why not expand the level-threshold low speed zones from the junction at Balloch Park right though to the roundabout at the Lomond Shores entrance?



Village Centre - The Village Square View B



Village Centre Vision (View B - see map on previous page)

Village Centre - Moss O'Balloch

The Moss O' Balloch is highly valued as a green space that is 'in the village'. Recent investment in a play park, landscape improvements and picnic area have helped to make it an even better facility for the community. However, it is clear that given the amount of space here and key issues facing the village as a whole, there is an opportunity for this area to do more to support the village, both as green amenity but also as a multifunctional space that can respond to changing needs throughout the year.

- o Open up to Village Square and provide/relocate picnic benches to this area to stimulate activity adjoining the square and a space for families to sit while using the play park and local businesses.
- o Assess potential to extend parking provision to better support parking needs in the village on a day-to-day basis.
- o Assess potential to provide pockets of reinforced grass overflow parking for peak times when there is higher demand for parking in the village. This should be mindful of the Highland Games and other annual events who use this space.
- o Provide more recreation opportunities for a range of ages and abilities
- o Explore opportunities to link the space better with adjacent areas, such as a path to the riverside and opening up to Balloch Park.



The Moss O'Balloch could do more to provide recreation and parking to support the village's aspirations



Active Village Centre



Grasscrete Parking



Activities for all ages

Village Centre - Past, Present, Future

During the Charrette, there was much discussion about Balloch's past as well as its future. History still resonates, through a continued culture of leisure cruising, boat building and the retained significance of Balloch Park as a green space for everyone to enjoy. However Balloch's purpose is going through a period of change, with a significant shift from textile and industrial mineral industries to tourism. Sensitivity to Balloch's unique story is an important part of shaping its future.

- o The character of Balloch isn't about its buildings, it's about the river and it's proximity to the loch. The river must be the focus of efforts to restore Balloch's identity.
- o Balloch has evolved throughout it's history to take advantage of economic opportunity. Whether industry or boat building, Balloch has always been an adaptive and active village. Balloch's largest current economic opportunity lies in tourism.
- o For the local economy to thrive, Balloch must invest in a high quality infrastructure that helps it to make the most of tourism potential, with resulting skills, jobs and opportunities made available to young people and the wider community.
- o Where there are opportunities to tell people about Balloch's story, these should be explored. Examples include the siting of the Henry Lynn drinking fountain (currently in West Dumbartonshire Council storage) in a prominent public space, such as the new Station Square, and a land art installation at the 'Old Balloch Castle,' which is a scheduled ancient monument.



Balloch Pier and Station



River Leven Tea Boat



The Silk Factory - British Silk Dyeing Company



Henry Lynn's Boat Yard



Moss O'Balloch Fair



Henry Lynn Fountain

Orientation

Visitors to Balloch need to know what the village has to offer and how to get there. At the moment, the various arrival points and destinations are poorly connected: for example, wayfinding between Loch Lomond Shores, the railway station, Balloch Park and the 'Maid of the Loch' is all but clear.

An integrated signage strategy is needed to:

- o Identify the main places that need to be connected, the individual businesses or attractions within those areas, and onward connections to other places such as the Three Lochs Way, John Muir Way and NCR 7.
- o Communicate information clearly, creatively and attractively to visitors, using a wayfinding design and strategy that's appropriate to Balloch's aspirations as the gateway to Loch Lomond and the National Park.
- o Be robust and flexible to allow signage to change as destinations and attractions change in the future.



Interpretation Signage , Taunton



Wayfinding Trail, Berlin



Robust Wayfinding, Taunton



Historical Wayfinding, Helensburgh

Parking

People have said that car parking can be a problem. They have also said that improving the village character is essential. This means that satisfying demand by creating large swathes of car parking is not option. Enhancement, better regulation and management of existing car parking within the village offers a viable option for improving the situation for locals and visitors alike.

What's the problem?

- o Lack of car parking on busy summer weekends.
- o Parking and traffic management during major events.
- o Indiscriminate parking in village centre causing congestion.
- o Poor coach drop-off facilities in the village centre.

Parking - What needs to happen?

- o Undertake parking survey during summer 2016 to properly understand the situation, with community input and use this to shape action plan.
- o Increase awareness of the rail service as a way of getting to Balloch.
- o Maximise the number of parking spaces at Moss O'Balloch, West riverside, Balloch Pier, Balloch Castle, Old Luss Road, Balloch Road and Drymen Road – without damaging the quality of these areas.
- o Improve walking routes and signage throughout the village, including a bridge or ferry across the River Leven at the mouth of the loch.
- o Investigate high-quality shuttle connecting car parks, railway station and destinations.
- o An 'Event Parking Strategy' should be developed
- o During major events, maintain vehicle access to businesses in the village centre.
- o Redesign Balloch Road in village centre to minimise indiscriminate parking.
- o Create coach drop-off space at proposed 'Station Square'.
- o Individual drivers (except blue badge holders) need to accept that they might not be able to park as conveniently as they wish.



This diagram shows all current car parks in Balloch. It is acknowledged that some are restricted/ prioritised for customer and staff use, however for Balloch, to avoid becoming car-park dominated, it is necessary to look at how existing car parks can help as part of a holistic parking strategy.



Balloch Castle

Balloch Park

The people of Balloch love their park! Quite right too: it must be one of the best-situated parks in the world. The Charrette identified a desire to invest in the Park, make it easier to get to, and bring the Castle back into use.

What should happen?

- o Improve paths into the Park along the river/loch and from Moss O' Balloch, including opening vistas through trees.
- o Create a bridge or ferry across the mouth of the river as a new way into the Park.
- o Attractive lighting along main drive from gate to Castle.
- o Café/toilets in Balloch Castle (complementary uses could include arts, culture, heritage, training and education).
- o Adventure activities for all ages in the Park.
- o Outdoor music and events space below Castle, with appropriate visitor and traffic management to minimise negative impacts on local businesses and residents.
- o Use Walled Garden as a venue for outdoor theatre and wedding marquees.
- o Nature and historic interpretation throughout the park, specifically on the site of the old castle and Walled Garden.
- o Make landscape feature and public information for former castle scheduled monument to support cultural heritage
- o Put in place erosion-reducing measures for the river banks and lochside.
- o See the 'Making it Happen' section for who should lead and who should support in manifesting these ideas.

Adventure activities are a good idea - make sure there are different activities like a treetop adventure, an obstacle courses going through tunnels etc.

Room for improvement but be careful not to over commercialise and spoil natural beauty

Options suggested during the Charrette

Camping facilities



Pavilion cafes and activity



Adventure activities



Improved access along River/Loch



Bring Castle into active use



Music and Community Events Space



Walled Garden

- Conference/wedding venue with marquee space
- Outdoor theatre



Balloch Park



Accessible Walkway and Park Installation, Santo Tirso, Portugal



Forest Slide Park, Austria



Enchanted forest BC, Canada



Castlewellan Forest Park, Northern Ireland



Rimutaka Forest Park, New Zealand

Making More of Balloch Park

Balloch Park has capacity for a range of activities and small enterprises that can enhance visitor experience whilst maintaining everything that locals find special and worth preserving. Most importantly, as a local resource it should work harder to provide outdoor activity for all ages and support Balloch's position as a great place to visit.

One example of a place where public bodies have successfully worked together to provide a successful year round attraction for people of all ages is Lough Key Forest and Activity Park in the Republic of Ireland.

Below is a list of key strategic initiatives that have contributed to it's success:

- o Owned by public bodies who established a commercial private company to run the park.
- o Initial investment focused on increased marina space and facilities for people to moor overnight.
- o All profits are re-invested back into facilities
- o Indoor and outdoor adventure activities for all ages including tree top obstacle course and zipwires, treetop walk, playparks and 'Boda Borg' an indoor team focused obstacle course.
- o Signposted forest walks and cycling
- o Lakeside Cafe and conference facility
- o Camp site
- o Year round outdoor events
- o Picnic areas

There are lots of examples throughout the UK and elsewhere of places that provide a diverse range of reasons to go and spend quality time with family in beautiful surroundings at all times of the year. Balloch Park can be one of these places.



Lakeside café and conference facility



Boda Borg - indoor activities



Tree top obstacle course



Balloch Castle

The Category A listed Balloch Castle enjoys a beautiful setting overlooking the loch but is currently suffering from lack of use. It is in public ownership and a significant sum of money is required to repair the external envelope - of which is already committed to making wind and water-tight.

Some people have fond memories of the days when Balloch Castle used to be a tea room, and others have told us that they wish there was something here they could point visitors toward. There is a collective desire to breath new life into the building with a range of uses suggested including cafe, events, heritage, culture, education or training. As the building is in public ownership, a process will need to be initiated to find the right range of uses for the building.

None of the uses suggested for the park are dependent on getting the castle back in use again, however an income stream and viable business plan built on a sustainable long term strategy for the park can help to support getting funding, such as Heritage Lottery Funding, to refurbish and eventually re-open the castle.

What should happen?

- o Find a viable use for the building that is compatible with long term sustainability, funding potential and ownership.
- o See the 'Making it Happen' section for who should lead and who should support in manifesting these ideas.

Balloch castle would make a good training college for young people wanting a career in the tourist industry.

Training could be given and put to practice in the restaurant which could be opened and it could be used for all sorts of events with staffing covered by trainees under supervision. Trainees move on to jobs and next batch begin.



BALLOCH CASTLE

Ground Floor Plan: History

Scale 1:100 @ A1/1:200 @ A3
Simpson & Brown Architects April 2012

Early to mid C18th	Dark Red
Possibly pre 1809 masonry	Pink
1809	Blue
Early C19th separate phase	Light Pink
C19th before 1860	Light Blue
C20th alteration	Green

Balloch Castle



Ford Castle, Northumberland

- o School trips with outdoor adventure activities, education and overnight accommodation
- o Operated by private company in collaboration with Northumberland County Council

Crowdfund funding from people from Balloch living abroad as well as at home

Would like to see it as a multi- purpose space for outdoor activities, school groups, performances



Dunoon Burgh Hall

- o Local community support stimulated regeneration project
- o Artist exhibition space and community spaces combines daily use with larger events and occasions
- o Heritage lottery funded project currently underway

I Love the Ford Castle model

Should be used to access outdoor activities as well as a cafe, bike, and walk links



Lowther Castle, Cumbria

- o Consolidated ruin and regenerated garden run by a charitable trust with a 25 year plan for full restoration
- o Home to outdoor concerts and festivals, sports events and obstacle runs, horticultural events and guided tours

Balloch Castle should be developed as a restaurant or café with local arts and crafts exhibited

It could be used as a wedding venue - similar to 'House for an Art Lover' in Bellahouston Park



Linlithgow Burgh Halls

- o Re-opened in 2011 after undergoing a £5.2 million restoration, funded by West Lothian Council in partnership with the Heritage Lottery Fund, Historic Scotland and The National Lottery through Creative Scotland.
- o Multifunctional venue; visitor attraction, art gallery, hireable space, restaurant/cafe and tourist information centre

Both Woodbank and Balloch Castle are potential assets - ways should be sought by the National Park, local council, Scottish Enterprise and developers to realise and maximise their potential

Woodbank House



Woodbank House

Despite not being discussed at length during the Charrette Workshops, Woodbank House has been identified within the Local Development Plan (LDP) as a significant site for the village, offering visitor experience development opportunities.

The category A Listed Woodbank House was built in the 1770s and used as a hotel for much of the 20th century. It is privately owned and is on the Buildings at Risk Register for Scotland. Repairing the building will take a considerable amount of money, so restoration alone is not likely to be financially viable for a private owner. The building is therefore only likely to be restored if there is some “enabling development” in the grounds to generate money – for example, houses or flats which would cross-subsidise the cost of repairing the listed building.

The site is identified in the LDP as for ‘Visitor Experience’. This suggests visitor accommodation as an appropriate use and in keeping with the house’s past life as a hotel. Given the significant challenge of restoring Woodbank House, some non-tourism uses may be acceptable, combined with an overall approach that addresses the preference for ‘Visitor Experience’ development.

Regardless of proposed uses, any development will need to be sensitive to the historic building and associated structures and to the landscape setting. The diagram adjacent shows the two key aspects of the house, north-east and south-east that should be maintained. Development should not have an adverse effect to views to and from the house in these directions.

Tree management can restore the visibility of these key facades in line with the original setting of the house against the strong backdrop of the woodland behind. The primary area suitable for some development is identified along Old Luss Road, this can be at the road itself, screened with increased tree planting or potentially set within the woodland, subject to an assessment.

What should happen?

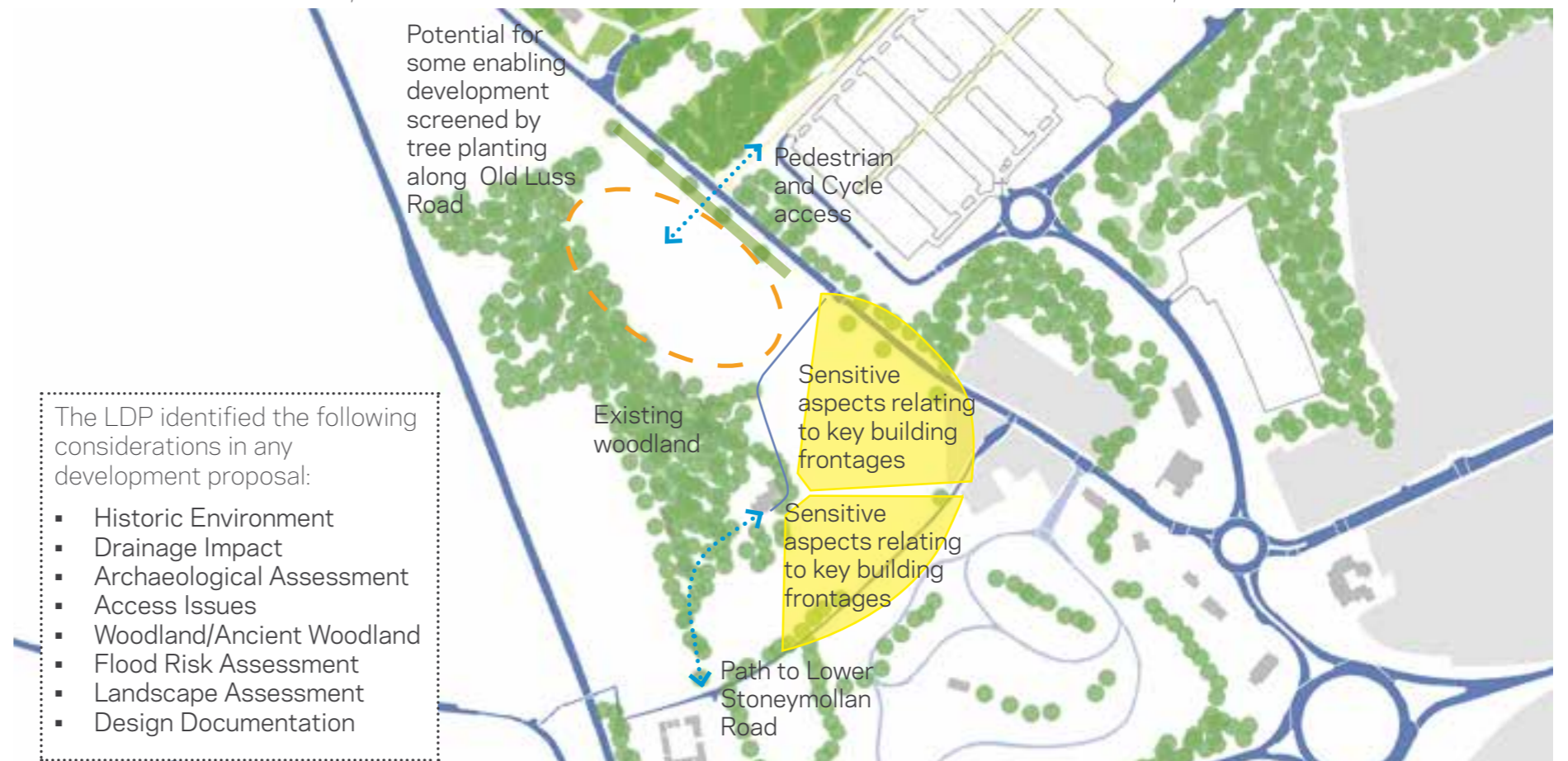
- o Renovate and re-use historic A-listed building.
- o Sensitive new development in grounds to generate funding.
- o Appropriate landscaping, drainage and flood mitigation.
- o See the ‘Making it Happen’ section for who should lead and who should support in manifesting these ideas.



Balloch and Woodbank House, 1938



Woodbank House Hotel, 1940s





Balloch viewed from the north-east

Making it happen 03

Working Together

Transforming Balloch will take a big effort from lots of organisations over a few years.

The National Park and West Dunbartonshire Council are ready to play their part. But they will need support from local businesses and community groups.

Getting funding

The Council and National Park will need to secure funding from other sources to implement improvements to publicly owned spaces and buildings like the village centre, Balloch Park and Balloch Castle.

To secure external funding for other projects, local community groups or organisations will need to seek potential funders like Scottish Government, the Heritage Lottery Fund and Sustrans. Funders like these always look for evidence of community support.

A strategy to bring the Castle back into use may benefit from a new community-based organisation to access funds that are not open to the Council or National Park. This might be a Community Development Trust or 'Friends of Balloch Castle'.

Bringing life and activity

We're proposing to create better spaces for events and activities in the village centre, Moss O'Balloch and Balloch Park. But these will only come to life if local businesses and community groups make use of them, bringing visitors, footfall and activity for local people. That means working together to organise and market a programme of events throughout the year.

What's important is that the local community will need to take the lead, perhaps through creating a new Balloch Forum, the establishment of a development trust or a similar organisation. Following are a selection of examples from throughout Scotland where collaborative effort has had a successful outcome.



Garrison House Development Trust, Cumbernauld

Garrison House is a prominent historic building and gardens in the heart of Millport. The size and historic interest of the building is not dissimilar to Balloch Castle.

In 2001 a major fire left the building as a derelict eyesore. In the aftermath, Cumbernauld Community Development Company was established and led a renovation project of the building for use by a range of partners. The work took several years and was completed in 2008 at a total cost of £5 million, after successful bids to the National Lottery and other funders.

The end result has been a complete transformation providing a vibrant hub of activities in Millport for locals and visitors alike. Garrison House now boasts the local GP surgery, a library, a Museum, Café, local council services office and rooms available for community use. The building itself has been remodelled over two floors. The historic exterior of the house has been refurbished and the stonework completely restored. The interior has been opened up to create a modern facility, making full use of light and space.

Cumbernauld Community Development Company has now moved onto other projects to develop the island, as outlined in its 2015-2022 strategic plan.



Cassiltoun Trust, Castle Milk Stables, Glasgow

This award-winning project in the south of Glasgow demonstrates the benefits of partnership working between a well established community based organisation and a building preservation trust to enable the restoration and re-use of a much-valued historic building.

This Category B listed stable block lay derelict and in extremely poor condition, losing its roof and distinctive dome. Despite its condition, the building was much-loved by local people as an important landmark and part of their heritage. A campaign was initiated to save the building and create a multiuse, sustainable, community-owned resource with training facilities, office space for the local housing association, a nursery and lettable space for third-sector organisations. Glasgow Building Preservation Trust helped to coordinate the development of the £4.5 million project including fundraising from over 27 funders!

The renovated building was officially opened in 2007 and is now owned by Cassiltoun Trust, a subsidiary of Cassiltoun Housing Association. It is a vibrant hub for a variety of social enterprises and community uses. The project has gone on to act as a catalyst for economic and environmental regeneration bringing new services, training, employment and recreational opportunities for the local community.

Working Together



Maryhill Burgh Halls Trust, Glasgow

The Burgh Halls, dating from 1878, were renovated in a £9.6m project between 2009 and 2012, with a cocktail of funding from the Scottish Government, Heritage Lottery Fund, European Union, Glasgow City Council and others.

The project was led by Maryhill Burgh Halls Trust, a community-led organisation set up specifically for the purposes of the redevelopment of the Burgh Halls and its long term management, bringing the Halls back into the heart of the Maryhill community. As well as managing and delivering the project, the Trust is also responsible for implementation of the business plan to operate the halls on a sustainable long term model.

The construction work included refurbishment, selective demolition and new build. It now offers 1,350m² of lettable business space in up to 13 discrete units, the hall itself for weddings, conferences, classes and social gatherings, a café, nursery, historical displays and a music studio. The facilities complement the new community sports and leisure centre in the adjacent former Baths and Fire Station, opened in 2010.



Fraserburgh 'Super Saturdays'

In response to concern about declining footfall in the town centre, a small group of active retailers in the local business association got together in 2014 to start monthly 'Super Saturdays' during the summer to lure more shoppers and visitors to the town centre. The idea was a series of family-friendly events, live entertainment, market stalls, food and drink.

Following the success of the initial pilot in 2014, this entire community-led initiative grew to six themed monthly Super Saturdays starting in May 2015. Different themes include fishing, sports, farming, and food and drink, and a special festive event before Christmas.

The key to success have been hard work and leadership by a small group of local retailers, coupled with making sure that as many local businesses, entertainers and producers take the opportunity to show what they have to offer.

Aberdeenshire Council regeneration officer Gillian Bain (who also runs a business in the town centre) said Super Saturdays were an important part of helping to revive the town: "The regeneration action plan for Fraserburgh recognises that regeneration is not just about buildings and the economy, but about communities and an active town centre."



Huntly Development Trust

Huntly in Aberdeenshire is a great example of what can be achieved when the public sector joins forces with an active and committed local community.

Between 2005 and 2008, the Aberdeenshire Towns Partnership helped community groups in Huntly to carry out many different projects to improve the town, in line with the community's 2020 vision for Huntly and its related action plan. Projects included establishing Huntly Hairst, a food and farming festival, a regular Farmers Market, Huntly Rewards loyalty card scheme, www.huntly.net and part-funding the Huntly Shop Enhancement Scheme. The community then established Huntly Development Trust with support from Aberdeenshire Council and the Development Trust Association Scotland.

In the years since then, the Development Trust, town centre businesses and other local groups (such as Huntly and District Tourism Action Group and Deveron Arts) have worked to deliver a range of initiatives in the town centre. Recently, support from Creative Scotland's Creative Place Awards in 2013 allowed the Huntly Cultural Fund to award 38 grants to local artists and crafters.

Action Plan

The purpose of this Charrette report is to provide a template for local stakeholders to take forward a package of improvements to transform Balloch and deliver the vision outlined in this report. This provides a start point and once these are examined in detail there may be further refinement and update.

Many of the individual projects will need further feasibility study and design work as specified in the action plan. The Charrette report is intended to inform this further work, as well as complementing the emerging Local Development Plan (LDP) by setting parameters for how key LDP opportunity sites in Balloch could be developed (particularly sites MU1 The Old Station, VE1 West riverside, VE2 East Riverside, VE3 Balloch Castle and VE4 Woodbank House).

The following action plan breaks down all the projects mentioned within the report into actionable steps in the short term (next 2 years), medium term (2-5 years) and long term (beyond 5 years).
Priority projects have been identified as Balloch Castle; West Riverside; Parking Strategy; Station Square and Events/Activity Strategy.

Every project will depend on effective collaborative action to be brought to fruition; the action plan suggests who the lead and support players should be and where there might be opportunities for other organisations to be positively involved.

In addition to the project-specific actions identified in the action plan, it is important that appropriate governance and communication arrangements are put in place to keep the momentum of the Charrette, and ensure that there is demonstrable progress towards action during 2016. This should take place in discussion with the community, establishing a mechanism for local communication. At its simplest, this could be a steering group comprising a range of partners to lead and monitor implementation of the Charrette action programme. There may also be scope for targeted local organisations to be established, such as a business association (to undertake collective efforts like marketing and events programming) and a Community Development Trust (to deliver or contribute to the delivery of projects which would benefit from community involvement such as riverbank management and events programming in public spaces). Organisations like DTA Scotland can provide useful advice and experience on which models might be most appropriate for Balloch.

Project		Short Term (Years 1-2)	Medium Term (Years 2-5)	Long Term (Years 5+)		Lead	Support	Opportunities for others
New riverside walkway connecting village centre, Balloch Pier and Loch Lomond Shores	PP	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Work up scheme design (to be integrated with West riverside proposals), agree funding package in conjunction with wider riverside proposals	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Implement as early phase of wider West riverside proposals.			<ul style="list-style-type: none">Scottish Enterprise	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Preferred bidder for West riversideNational Park Authority	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Sustrans
Secure a viable use for Balloch Castle that is compatible with long term sustainability, funding potential and ownership constraints; include café/toilets for public use. Maximise local skills/employability benefits.	PP	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Options appraisal to find appropriate use of Castle building.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Appoint delivery partner to develop and implement viable proposal, business plan and funding package, maximising local skills/employability benefits.			<ul style="list-style-type: none">WDC	<ul style="list-style-type: none">National Park AuthorityCommunity CouncilGlasgow City Council	<ul style="list-style-type: none">New business opportunities
Develop West Riverside site	PP	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Prepare development proposals for land owned by Scottish Enterprise.Agree local employability package as part of development delivery	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Implement development proposals and local employability package			<ul style="list-style-type: none">Scottish Enterprise	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Preferred developer for West riversideCommunity CouncilWDC Economic DevelopmentSustrans	<ul style="list-style-type: none">New business opportunities

Action Plan

Project		Short Term (Years 1-2)	Medium Term (Years 2-5)	Long Term (Years 5+)		Lead	Support	Opportunities for others
Activity/Event Strategy and Plan	PP	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Prepare an activity and events strategy and plan 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Deliver and facilitate calendar of events and activities 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Deliver and facilitate calendar of events and activities 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> National Park Authority 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> WDC Loch Lomond Shores Community Council 	
New 'Station Square' arrival point and public space Project may include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Rename station 'Balloch Loch Lomond'. New space between Station/ Sweeneys Cruises. High quality public realm. Resite historic bronze fountain. Develop Management and Maintenance Plan Maximise local skills/employability benefits. Public conveniences 	PP	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Prepare detailed public realm design and management & maintenance plan. Rename station. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Implement public realm improvements 			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> WDC 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Sustrans Sweeneys Cruises Scottish Enterprise National Park Community Council VisitScotland Local businesses Network Rail/ Abellio/ Scotrail/ SPT 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> New business opportunities
Parking strategy to maximise parking availability Project may include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Undertake parking survey during summer 2016 to properly understand the situation, with community input use this to shape action plan. Increase awareness of rail travel to Balloch. Maximise number of parking spaces at Moss O'Balloch, West riverside, Balloch Pier, Balloch Castle, Old Luss Road, Balloch Road and Drymen Road - without damaging the area's character. Improve walking routes and signage around the village, including a bridge or ferry across the River Leven at the mouth of the loch. Investigate high-quality shuttle connecting car parks, railway station and destinations. An 'Event Parking Strategy' should be investigated and developed During major events, maintain vehicle access to businesses in the village centre. Redesign Balloch Road in village centre to minimise indiscriminate parking. Create coach drop-off space at proposed 'Station Square'. 	PP	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Undertake summer parking survey, with input from Community Council and businesses. Commission parking strategy for village as a whole, using Charrette report as the brief. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Begin phased implementation of parking strategy. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Continue phased implementation of parking strategy. 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> WDC 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> National Park Authority Local businesses Community Council Residents Scottish Enterprise Key landowners Abellio Scotrail Sustrans 	

Action Plan

Project		Short Term (Years 1-2)	Medium Term (Years 2-5)	Long Term (Years 5+)		Lead	Support	Opportunities for others
<p>Management and Activity Plan for Balloch Park</p> <p>Project may include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Improve paths into the Park along river/loch and from Moss O'Balloch, and integration with new connection across river mouth. Selective woodland felling in the Park to open up vistas. Enhanced lighting in the Park. Historical interpretation on site of old castle near Walled Garden. Investment in infrastructure for outdoor events spaces below Balloch Castle and in Walled Garden. Appropriate free adventure activities in the Park. Measures to reduce erosion of river banks and lochside. Establish 'Friends of Balloch Park' to co-ordinate proposals and ongoing management. 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Prepare Management Plan for Balloch Park. Agree local employability package as part of development delivery if appropriate. Establish 'Friends of Balloch Park' to help co-ordinate events and management of Park. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Begin phased delivery of improvements and Management and Maintenance Plan, maximising local skills/employability benefits 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Continue phased delivery of improvements and Management and Maintenance Plan, maximising local skills/employability benefits. 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> WDC 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> National Park Authority Community Council Glasgow City Council Friends of Balloch Park 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Love Loch Lomond West Dunbartonshire Environment Trust Woodland Trust
<p>New 'Village Square' at entrance to Moss O'Balloch</p> <p>Project may include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> High quality public realm. Maintain and improve as necessary Moss O'Balloch: play park, paths, events/ recreation spaces, drainage and parking. Organise events and activities to bring activity to the new space. Develop Management and Maintenance Plan Maximise local skills/employability benefits. 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Prepare detailed public realm design and management & maintenance plan. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Implement public realm improvements. 			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> WDC 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> National Park Authority Local businesses Community Council Sustrans 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> New business opportunities
<p>Signage strategy to develop clear, flexible signage hierarchy:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Strategic arrival points and destinations. Individual businesses/attractions within those strategic destinations. Onward connections to other places via NCN and long distance paths. Develop Management and Maintenance Plan. 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop co-ordinated and flexible signage strategy using Charrette report as the brief. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Begin phased implementation as development takes place and funding becomes available. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Continue implementation. 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> National Park Authority 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> WDC Local businesses and facilities Abellio Scotrail VisitScotland Scottish Enterprise Community Council 	
<p>Collaborative review of pier area</p>			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Collaborative design to maximise integration of development proposals and supporting infrastructure/facilities 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Implement development proposals. 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> National Park Authority 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Scottish Enterprise Loch Lomond Steamship Company Loch Lomond Water Sports Association WDC Roads 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Sustrans

Action Plan

Project		Short Term (Years 1-2)	Medium Term (Years 2-5)	Long Term (Years 5+)		Lead	Support	Opportunities for others
Tidy up river and manage erosion of river banks - maximising opportunities for local volunteer groups and skills/employability benefits.		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Prepare River Leven Management Plan from Loch Lomond to barrage. Remove abandoned boats from water. Selective felling of trees on Monkey Island and banks to reveal views. 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Secure funding and deliver public realm improvements Implement Management and Maintenance Plan. 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> WDC 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Scottish Water National Park Authority SEPA Riparian Landowners Community Council 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> West Dunbartonshire Environment Trust
Woodbank House <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Renovate and re-use historic A-listed building, with sensitive new 'enabling' development in grounds to generate funding for renovation. LDP proposed use is tourism. 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Submit planning application. Promote opportunity through Local Development Plan delivery programme. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Implement development and renovate Listed Building. 			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Agent and Landowner 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> National Park Authority 	
New connection across River Leven between Balloch Pier and Balloch Park			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Feasibility study exploring all options - bridge, ferry, bus/shuttle. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Investigate funding for preferred option. 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> National Park Authority Scottish Enterprise WDC 		
Integrate new/improved pedestrian/cycle routes with local path network: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> National Cycle Network, River Leven towpath, John Muir Way, Three Lochs Way and via Loch Lomond Shores to Cameron House 			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Design signage and path improvements to connect riverside walkway to wider path network, including Management & Maintenance Plan. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Implement signage and path connections 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> WDC 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> National Park Authority Sustrans Scottish Enterprise Cameron House 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> CSGN Helensburgh & District Access Trust West Dunbartonshire Environment Trust



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