

# National Park Authority Board Meeting

Agenda Item 15



## LIVE Park Consultation

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### *Paper for decision*

#### 1. PURPOSE

1.1 Following the recent LIVE Park consultation on our Main Issues Report, this report provides an overview of the response received, the issues raised and the next steps. Approval is also sought to publish the National Park Authority's position on a list of additional proposed sites received as part of the consultation.

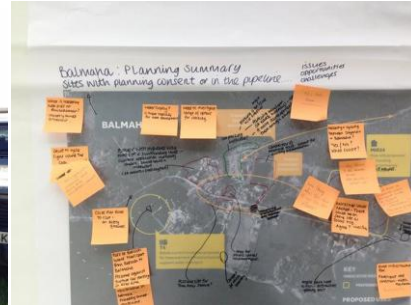
#### 2. RECOMMENDATION

2.1 It is recommended that members:

- Note the contents of this report.
- Approve publication of Appendix 1: Additional Site's Assessment – Summary Report for a 6 week public consultation, with delegation to the Director of Operations to approve minor editorial and presentation changes.

#### 3. BACKGROUND

3.1 The Main Issues Report (MIR) is not a draft plan nor does it include draft policies. It is a discussion based document that outlines where the Authority considers the existing Local Plan may need changed, focusing on key topics or locations, as a basis for consultation with our communities and partners. It is the principal opportunity to consult with stakeholders on the Plan's proposed content and involve the wider public. The photos below share some of the aspects of the consultation.



#### 4. CONSIDERATION

4.1 Following the Board's approval of the Main Issues Report for consultation at its meeting on the 17 March, public consultation started on Monday the 28 April until 14<sup>th</sup> of July. This included a 1 week extension following a request from some communities. The consultation received 131 responses from individuals and organisations which generated over 650 individual comments. These were

# National Park Authority Board Meeting

Agenda Item 15

## LIVE Park Consultation

---

published recently and available to view in Appendix 2. In addition to this, over 80 web based comments were also received along with feedback a public meetings/events, meetings with stakeholders, our young people and on social media. The report of engagement with Young People prepared in collaboration with Planning Aid Scotland is attached as Appendix 3.

### Consultation – Process

- 4.2 The consultation was informed by extensive engagement with many of our communities to help shape the Main Issues Report. It was also a way to ensure that we provided an opportunity to ‘check in’ with communities that we have not had as much feedback from in the past. Through informal briefings at various Community Council and Area Network meetings, communities were provided with early notice of the content of the consultation and their feedback was sought on how best to support participation in their communities.
- 4.3 The investment of significant time and resources in early engagement to help inform the preparation and content of the Main Issues Report, through our programme of charrette events and workshops, has delivered several demonstrable benefits, most notably fewer responses when compared to the past Local Plan consultation and a smaller number of contentious issues or sites. Positive feedback was received on the preparation of the Main Issues Report in an external project review (commissioned as part of a Scottish Government pilot) that included interviews with community, landowner, Council and government agency representatives. The full report is attached in Appendix 4.
- 4.4 The consultation involved a multi-media approach to promote the questions and proposals for the future development in the National Park over the next 20. This included social media, local newspapers and national TV and Radio. The Main Issues Report itself was written and presented in a highly visual manner to be as accessible as possible to a wide range of people. An overall summary is attached in Appendix 5.
- 4.5 A wide range of opportunities were provided for people to engage in the consultation, with a particular focus on young people and working age families – as these are traditionally the groups we have seen less participation from in the past - while maintaining communication through established means and forums. It is considered that this has been very successful, with an excellent take up of the opportunities provided.

Examples include the Visioning event for Young People at the Hermitage Academy – you can read the LIVE Park blog about the event in Appendix 6 ([weblink](#)).



# National Park Authority Board Meeting

Agenda Item 15

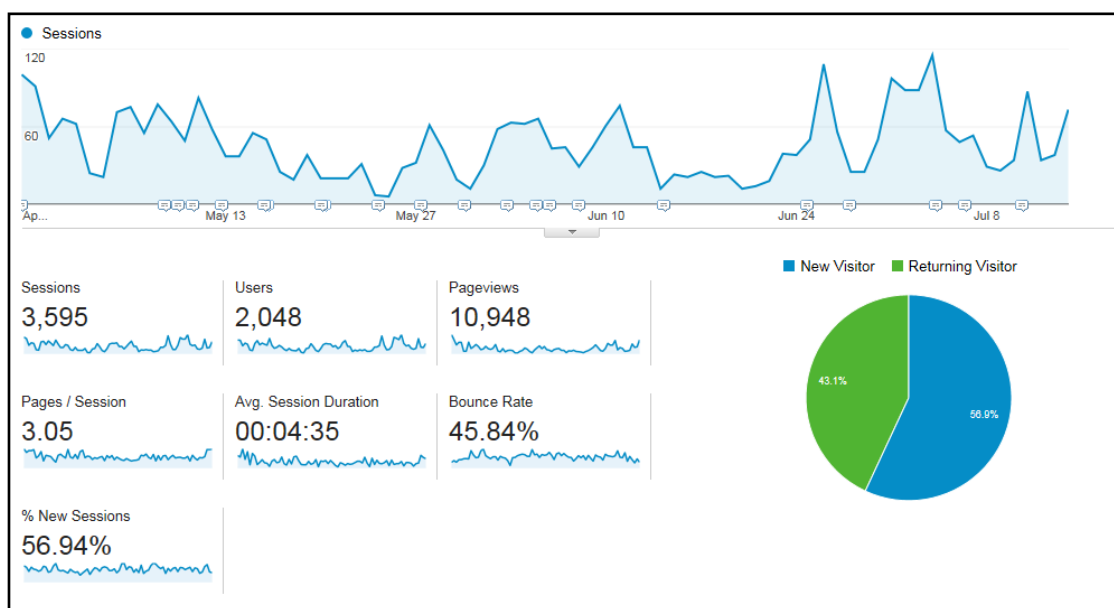
## LIVE Park Consultation

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Also, one of our 'Social Reporters' interviewed Andrew Hutchison, Principal Teacher of Curriculum, Hermitage Academy about the youth projects for LIVE Park is included as Appendix 7 ([weblink](#)).



- 4.6 By monitoring [www.ourlivepark.com](http://www.ourlivepark.com) website activity, including how many people accessed the website and when provides a helpful insight as illustrated in the graphics below:



Google Analytics overview of all website sessions for the consultation period 28<sup>th</sup> April until 14<sup>th</sup> July.

- 4.7 As you can see, viewing levels of the [www.ourlivepark.com](http://www.ourlivepark.com) website were consistent throughout the consultation period with a slight increase in activity towards the end of the consultation period. Ongoing events, blogs, updates/tweets via Facebook and Twitter, as well as interviews on the radio and television will have helped maintain momentum. This demonstrates a potentially much more significant interaction with the consultation than the number of responses suggests.

### Consultation – Response Summary

- 4.8 Overall, the response has been encouraging with general agreement on the selection of the four Main Issues – Rural Economy, Visitor Experience, Infrastructure

# National Park Authority Board Meeting

Agenda Item 15

## LIVE Park Consultation

---

and Services and Housing - and the identified main areas for change/unrealised potential. Generally, landowners, public bodies and businesses were supportive of increasing flexibility in policies while some individuals and communities were opposed or had concerns over this change. While officers are still working through the comments received along with the recently issued update to Scottish Planning Policy and National Planning Framework, the following is short summary of the more contentious issues or those that attracted the most comment. Processing the responses has taken longer than anticipated, due to the complexity of some of the responses. Officer's proposed response to the points raised in the responses will be issued with the Proposed Local Development Plan in the Spring. Further write up of other aspects of the consultation are being prepared – social media, stakeholder and community meetings/events - and will be published on the LIVE Park website.

### Town & Village Development Opportunities

- 4.9 The majority of comments received were in relation to two proposed developments – the housing proposal on Main Street, north of the graveyard in Drymen (Site MIR 62) and the visitor accommodation proposal at Braeval between Aberfoyle and Port of Menteith (Site MIR 4). Most of the comments were opposed to these development proposals. For Braeval, the reasons included – impact on Lake of Menteith Fisheries, impact on Site of Special Scientific Interest, adverse impact on wildlife, loss of woodland, protected species, need, impact on existing businesses, road access and drainage. For the Drymen site the reasons included – impact on Conservation Area/Listed Buildings, density, road access & safety and that there were other better suited sites.
- 4.10 Callander, Arrochar/Succoth/Tarbet areas were proposed as the main areas for change in the new Local Development Plan very much reflecting the recommendations from the charrette events in these areas. Relatively few comments were received on this updated development strategy, although in terms of Callander's proposed growth to the South a range of potential constraints were highlighted that may reduce the area available for development – this will be reviewed in detail over the coming months.
- 4.11 Lastly, within the responses 15 proposals for development were received, which varied from a suggestion by a third party to a detailed proposal for development and included re-submitted, amended and new sites. Following a review of these against our previously stated criteria used to determine those identified in the Main Issues Report, two new 'preferred' sites were identified in Callander (one of which is a modification) along with 3 'non-preferred' sites. Appendix 1 includes the Additional Site's Proposed Assessment – Summary Report.
- 4.12 The Scottish Government's Planning Circular 6/2013: Development Planning (paragraph 80) provides guidance on preparation of the Proposed Local

# National Park Authority Board Meeting

Agenda Item 15

## LIVE Park Consultation

---

Development Plan when considering including issues or sites not previously consulted upon in the Main Issues Report. It states “*If a particular issue or site arises that was not consulted on in the MIR, the planning authority may need to carry out further consultation on that particular issue before publishing its Proposed Plan, if it wants to include it in the plan*”. The practice across other planning authorities has been to undertake an additional, limited consultation on the review of new sites at this stage in the process. It is therefore recommended that Appendix 1 is issued for public consultation over a 6 week period.

### Main Issues, Potential Options and Solutions

- 4.13 Turning to the 4 Main Issues identified the following provides a summary of some of the main points raised (all comments can be viewed in Appendix 1):
- 4.14 Rural Economy
- Landowners/businesses supportive of preferred options.
  - Some concern from communities and individuals over increased flexibility for new business development in the countryside, some respondents sought more detail on what this might entail.
  - Buchanan Community Council, Luss and Montrose Estates supportive of exploring the Rural Development Framework Areas proposed.
- 4.15 Visitor Experience
- More detail on the application tourism strategy in National Park Partnership Plan – particularly why areas for small scale tourism identified.
  - General agreement on areas for focus of new development.
  - Careful balance needed when considering development in the rural area.
- 4.16 Infrastructure and Services
- General agreement on the issues and opportunities.
  - Suggested that piers should be included.
  - Seek opportunities to better align local authority planned investment.
  - Developer contributions need to be balanced with economic viability.
  - Partnership working with landowners and local authorities is important.
- 4.17 Housing
- A range of opinions on the amount of housing land required over the plan period. The Scottish Government, Argyll and Bute Council, Stirling Council and West Dunbartonshire Council all generally supported the preferred option of a target of 75 new homes per year for the National Park. Others, mainly individual residents, supported a lower target whilst some landowners and developers argued for a higher target.

# National Park Authority Board Meeting

Agenda Item 15

## LIVE Park Consultation

---

A range of views on how best to deliver affordable housing including the appropriate percentage contribution required on housing sites, the retention of affordable housing in perpetuity (or not) and whether open market housing should be supported on sites that are not located within settlement boundaries to act as enabling development.

No comments were received regarding the proposal to no longer continue with the Local Housing Needs Policy in the Loch Lomondside settlements.

### 5. CONCLUSIONS

- 5.1 The comments received provide a steer on the external view on the proposed development sites, revised development strategy and policy approaches outlined in the Main Issues Report. These need to be reviewed in detail along with feedback at public and stakeholder meetings/events, from young people and social media.
- 5.2 Officers are continuing to work through the detail of the comments in tandem with preparing the content for the Proposed Plan – basically a draft plan that we will publish for comment. Clarification may be sought from those who have responded and ongoing dialogue with key partner organisations will continue. Processing and managing the consultation responses does take time, and is important to make sure they are recorded correctly. Further assessment of sites and of our Towns and Villages may be required to investigate the issues raised.
- 5.3 Further informal engagement with some communities is planned for the autumn – in Callander and Buchanan (to inform the preparation of the Rural Development Framework) – and all communities and individuals will be kept up to date with our progress. The current timetable, as outlined in our Development Plan Scheme, is for the Proposed Local Development Plan to be issued for consultation in Spring 2015. Members will receive an update at its December meeting on progress.
- 5.4 The new additional development sites we received will be issued for a limited public consultation for 6 weeks starting in November 2014. Members are requested to approve the publication of these additional sites for consultation.(Appendix 1)

### 6. APPENDICES

1. Additional Site's Proposed Assessment – Summary Report (Proposed for consultation) ([weblink](#))
2. Report of Consultation (Part 1) – Informal/formal submitted comments ([weblink](#))
3. Report of Consultation (Part 2) – Youth Engagement ([weblink](#))
4. Gateway Review of Main Issues Report
5. Summary of consultation

# National Park Authority Board Meeting

Agenda Item 15

## LIVE Park Consultation

---

6. Blog Report of Visioning event for Young People at Hermitage Academy ([weblink](#))
7. Video of feedback from Young People at Hermitage Academy ([weblink](#)) and also one of the teachers ([weblink](#))

### 7. BACKGROUND INFORMATION

- 7.1 Main Issues Report ([weblink](#))
- 7.2 Development Plan Scheme (August 2014) ([weblink](#))

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