

Strathard Framework Consultation

Verbatim Comments

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Response 1 - Resident

Q1. In what capacity you are responding to this survey?

As a resident in Strathard

Pathway to change

Q2. Do you think we have captured the main changes on the pathway diagram (Page 6) that need to happen to decarbonise the area and increase the population so it is sustainable and thriving?

Yes

Please explain your answer or add any comments or thoughts
Important to keep the community engaged

Vision

Q6. The proposed vision is: "Strathard is a tranquil landscape and climate resilient place of outstanding natural beauty, with strong cultural heritage and cohesion. The area acts as a carbon sink while supporting biodiversity, recreation and local communities' self-sufficiency. Outdoor access and eco-tourism work alongside a balanced visitor management approach and a diverse local economy to support the protection and promotion of this diverse and connected eco-system and the well-being of local people and visitors. Nature based solutions are used to manage flooding, improve and enhance infrastructure and facilities." Do you agree with the wording of this vision?

Strongly agree

Please add any comments to explain your answer
I am not convinced that nature based flood management will suffice.

Area wide strategy - map

Q8. The area wide strategy covers wider land use change but also covers visitor management and issues relevant to all communities. The map shows the projects underway but also opportunities for where new tree planting, natural flood management and peatland restoration could take place and recreational routes that could be improved/joined up/promoted – aqueduct trail and the Ben Lomond long distance mountain bike route. Does the map capture all the strategic change needed in Strathard?

Yes

Area wide strategy - map

Q10. Do you agree with the priorities for the overall area?

Strongly agree

Landscape qualities and important views

Q13. The Framework has set out how views will be considered when a development proposal is being made – i.e. development in the foreground and middle ground of a view should not be overly intrusive, unsightly or prominent to the detriment of the view. Proposals in the background of the view should not harm the composition of the view in the context of landmarks – for example Ben Lomond or Church spire in Aberfoyle. For land use changes such as new woodland, where existing views will be unavoidably lost, other views should be identified and opened up. Do you agree with this approach?

Yes

Q14. The views have been collated from OS maps, visitor leaflets, walking guides, local knowledge and social media. Are there key views that need amended or removed or any key views that should be added?

Ensure adequate views of the aqueduct

The forest

Q15. Do you agree with these top 3 priorities for the Forest? Active Travel (walking/cycling routes) Heritage Paths/Aqueduct Path/Signage Renewable Energy

Strongly Agree

Please add any comments to explain your answer

The section about the aqueduct is incorrect--Loch Ard Local History Group (LALHG) is NOT developing a museum--XXXXXX

A revised form of words might be:

Develop and promote heritage paths in the area with a specific focus on an Aqueduct pathway connecting it to Loch Katrine to Milngavie. Link this into the Strathard Heritage Digital archive managed by Strathard Community Trust and Loch Ard Local History group. Also improve the signage in the forest with focus currently being on gravel bike signage, but further review and signage plan is required

It will be important to involve the LALHG in early discussions as well other key groups

Aberfoyle

Q17. Do you agree with these top 3 priorities for Aberfoyle? Mobility/Visitor Hub Flood Management Affordable Housing

Neutral

Kinlochard

Q19. Do you agree with the top 3 priorities for Kinlochard? Visitor Management Affordable Housing Infrastructure

Strongly agree

Please add any comments to explain your answer

This area has very limited capacity for further development.

Stronachlachar and Inversnaid

Q21. Do you agree with the top 3 priorities for Stronachlachar and Inversnaid? Signage Infrastructure
Renewable Energy/Carbon Neutral Travel

Neutral

Delivery plan

Q23. Do you agree we have the correct timescales and proposed lead organisations?

Yes

Q24. Please let us know which projects (maximum 2) you think should definitely happen in the next two years

Early progress on visitor pressures in Kinlochard.

Response 2 - Resident

Q1. In what capacity you are responding to this survey?

As a resident in Strathard

Pathway to change

Q2. Do you think we have captured the main changes on the pathway diagram (Page 6) that need to happen to decarbonise the area and increase the population so it is sustainable and thriving?

Don't know

Please explain your answer or add any comments or thoughts

1) Repopulation and sustainable community-based economic development requires employment opportunities to be developed not only in tourism, but also in other sectors. There needs to be some creative thinking about where such opportunities may be. Some may be linked to the green agenda (eg, re-use, up-cycling, re-purposing locally), some may be about providing needed services for residents locally (eg, targeted for families, children and young people, the elderly); but there may well be other unrelated opportunities.

2) Reaching net zero is about understanding the carbon footprint of all of the things we do - as individuals and as a community - and thinking of ways to minimise our carbon footprint. I'm sure I'm not alone in being unclear about some of these things, so I would welcome any initiatives that increase our awareness (eg, of how what we buy and consume contributes to global warming, what is 'good' and 'bad' forestry in terms of climate impact) and helps us learn and think constructively about (ie, deliberate on) measures which could reduce our carbon footprint locally - in our home, in our business and organisations, and community-wide.

3) Arguably, as a rural area with lots of trees, our target must be more ambitious than simply reaching net zero carbon emissions. Since (presumably) more densely populated urban parts of Scotland cannot hope to reach the net zero target, we must aim to go further - ie, to remove more carbon from the atmosphere than we emit - if the country as a whole is to reach net zero.

Vision

Q6. The proposed vision is: "Strathard is a tranquil landscape and climate resilient place of outstanding natural beauty, with strong cultural heritage and cohesion. The area acts as a carbon sink while supporting biodiversity, recreation and local communities' self-sufficiency. Outdoor access and eco-tourism work alongside a balanced visitor management approach and a diverse local economy to support the protection and promotion of this diverse and connected eco-system and the well-being of local people and visitors. Nature based solutions are used to manage flooding, improve and enhance infrastructure and facilities." Do you agree with the wording of this vision?

Strongly agree

Area wide strategy - map

Q8. The area wide strategy covers wider land use change but also covers visitor management and issues relevant to all communities. The map shows the projects underway but also opportunities for where new tree planting, natural flood management and peatland restoration could take place and recreational routes that could be improved/joined up/promoted – aqueduct trail and the Ben Lomond long distance mountain bike route. Does the map capture all the strategic change needed in Strathard?

Yes

Q8. The area wide strategy covers wider land use change but also covers visitor management and issues relevant to all communities. The map shows the projects underway but also opportunities for where new tree planting, natural flood management and peatland restoration could take place and recreational routes that could be improved/joined up/promoted – aqueduct trail and the Ben Lomond long distance mountain bike route. Does the map capture all the strategic change needed in Strathard?

Please add any comments to explain your answer

Though it could be more ambitious yet - eg, more joining up of cycle and walking paths to create loops.

Area wide strategy - map

Q10. Do you agree with the priorities for the overall area?

Strongly agree

Landscape qualities and important views

Q13. The Framework has set out how views will be considered when a development proposal is being made – i.e. development in the foreground and middle ground of a view should not be overly intrusive, unsightly or prominent to the detriment of the view. Proposals in the background of the view should not harm the composition of the view in the context of landmarks – for example Ben Lomond or Church spire in Aberfoyle. For land use changes such as new woodland, where existing views will be unavoidably lost, other views should be identified and opened up. Do you agree with this approach?

Don't know

The forest

Q15. Do you agree with these top 3 priorities for the Forest? Active Travel (walking/cycling routes) Heritage Paths/Aqueduct Path/Signage Renewable Energy

Strongly Agree

Aberfoyle

Q17. Do you agree with these top 3 priorities for Aberfoyle? Mobility/Visitor Hub Flood Management Affordable Housing

Agree

Please add any comments to explain your answer

I think we should commit and move as quickly as possible to having a shuttle-only service for onward (non-active) travel from Aberfoyle up the Strath (see the reasoning in a previous answer).

Some of our ambitions require actions and collaboration with communities and authorities outwith the Park area. For example, dramatically improving public transport and cycle routes into Aberfoyle from both Stirling and Glasgow directions. Also, wrt to flood management, I believe there are nature-based options to consider downstream of Cobleland.

Affordable housing is vital to keeping young people in Aberfoyle/Strathard, but so too is increasing the number and range of full year employment opportunities. Surely we need to factor this into criteria for development, along side tourism and carbon reduction.

Q18. Please suggest any changes you would make to these priorities

See above.

Kinlochard

Q19. Do you agree with the top 3 priorities for Kinlochard? Visitor Management Affordable Housing Infrastructure

Agree

Please add any comments to explain your answer

I particularly applaud this inclusion of affordable housing here. However, I'm aware that many if not most of the existing residents seem to be opposed to the building of affordable housing in Kinlochard (although they would like to see more families move in), and that the demographic here is far less mixed than in Aberfoyle. This seems both short sighted and unhealthy! I wonder what the Park or Council authorities might be able to do to shift the resistance or come up with proposals that would be acceptable to the community.

Stronachlachar and Inversnaid

Q21. Do you agree with the top 3 priorities for Stronachlachar and Inversnaid? Signage Infrastructure Renewable Energy/Carbon Neutral Travel

Agree

Please add any comments to explain your answer

Do not lose sight of the desire to increase the population living in these 'outlier' communities!

Delivery plan

Q23. Do you agree we have the correct timescales and proposed lead organisations?

I feel strongly that working on a quality cycle connection between Stirling and Aberfoyle is urgent - not only because it could encourage visitors not to drive to the area, but also because it will encourage residents who work or shop in Stirling to do so by bike. Whilst it is (more or less) possible to string quieter roads together to create a scenic route across the carse, this will not get people out of their cars. To replace car journeys, you need a reasonably direct, safe and tarmac-ed route. The most obvious option is to build a cycleway parallel to the A811 from Stirling to Buchlyvie, then tarmac the railway line from there to Cobleland.

Q24. Please let us know which projects (maximum 2) you think should definitely happen in the next two years

Stirling-Aberfoyle cycle link

Affordable housing

AND start work on the Shuttle bus service - but see comment below!

Any final comments

Q25. Please provide any other comments on the content of the draft Framework

Note: it seems the pace of change on many of these projects is likely to be glacial - funding then feasibility, then long grass! What can be done to really put a bomb under things and make the vision happen?? After all, these are all excellent examples of 'building back better and greener'!!

I only just realise from reading the delivery document, but the shuttle bus proposal is not intended to be mandatory!!! My assumption is that only residents, deliveries and essential workers should be allowed to drive beyond Aberfoyle/Milton, and that visitors should be obliged to use the shuttle service to go further up the strath - that it would be a frequent service, free or cheap to use. Other places in other countries have done similar things successfully. It really would put us on the map about being serious about carbon reduction and protecting our natural heritage!!!

Response 3 – Resident/Land owner

Q1. In what capacity you are responding to this survey?

Other (please specify):
As resident , land owner

Pathway to change

Q2. Do you think we have captured the main changes on the pathway diagram (Page 6) that need to happen to decarbonise the area and increase the population so it is sustainable and thriving?

Yes

Please explain your answer or add any comments or thoughts

But it is important that the restoration of peatland is prioritised as the destruction of the same by 75 years of forestation and its effect on watercourses has destroyed the quality of waters on the lochs and Duchray waters as well as a probable major cause of flooding.

Q3. Do you have any other suggestions for key milestones to include here or any milestones you would wish to see removed?

I would like to see a specific milestone set for the restoration of natural salmonid fish and their main spawning grounds .

Q4. What are your views on any risks or unintended consequences of this pathway?

The risk is indifference by Forest and Land Scotland and other landowners to the need for restoring such environment and the indifference of SEPA to achieving such results and curing the degradation of waterbodies. Nevertheless, the introduction several years ago by FLS of new procedures on draining new plantation, and ensuring that these do not drain directly into natural existing water courses are a positive move. However the original damage persists.

Vision

Q6. The proposed vision is: "Strathard is a tranquil landscape and climate resilient place of outstanding natural beauty, with strong cultural heritage and cohesion. The area acts as a carbon sink while supporting biodiversity, recreation and local communities' self-sufficiency. Outdoor access and eco-tourism work alongside a balanced visitor management approach and a diverse local economy to support the protection and promotion of this diverse and connected eco-system and the well-being of local people and visitors. Nature based solutions are used to manage flooding, improve and enhance infrastructure and facilities." Do you agree with the wording of this vision?

Neutral

Please add any comments to explain your answer

As per my previous comments, I agree but there must be a serious investment by the National Park in "designing out" the problems of lack of tourist infrastructure by establishing proper NP owned and run "hubs" with parking, toilet, waste disposal , road access , pathway connections and a basic necessity shop in areas away from villages and towns. This needs proper planning, funding and commitment. Take a page out of how the Rockies National Park in Canada is run.

Q7. If you disagree, please add any suggestions for how you think it should be changed

The National Parks needs to do this as the Forestry Land Scotland , who own most of the likely land/sites never will in my experience.

Area wide strategy - map

Q8. The area wide strategy covers wider land use change but also covers visitor management and issues relevant to all communities. The map shows the projects underway but also opportunities for where new tree planting, natural flood management and peatland restoration could take place and recreational routes that could be improved/joined up/promoted – aqueduct trail and the Ben Lomond long distance mountain bike route. Does the map capture all the strategic change needed in Strathard?

No

Please add any comments to explain your answer

See previous comments. Parking on Loch Ard is very limited

Q9. Please provide any suggested changes to this map

Herbivore issues no longer exist or are very limited in Loch Ard area. I cannot access the Interactive Map to offer more comment.

Area wide strategy - map

Q10. Do you agree with the priorities for the overall area?

Agree

Landscape qualities and important views

Q13. The Framework has set out how views will be considered when a development proposal is being made – i.e. development in the foreground and middle ground of a view should not be overly intrusive, unsightly or prominent to the detriment of the view. Proposals in the background of the view should not harm the composition of the view in the context of landmarks – for example Ben Lomond or Church spire in Aberfoyle. For land use changes such as new woodland, where existing views will be unavoidably lost, other views should be identified and opened up. Do you agree with this approach?

Yes

Please add any comments to explain your answer

No changes to the loch side natural environment/ beauty should be allowed.

Q14. The views have been collated from OS maps, visitor leaflets, walking guides, local knowledge and social media. Are there key views that need amended or removed or any key views that should be added?

Loch side environment/views should be preserved.

The forest

Q15. Do you agree with these top 3 priorities for the Forest? Active Travel (walking/cycling routes) Heritage Paths/Aqueduct Path/Signage Renewable Energy

Neutral

Please add any comments to explain your answer

The FLS must prioritise their management actions to specifically address Strathard community needs such as the matter of them blocking the ONLY alternative access road to the Strathard Glen when the B829 road is blocked by floods. It is essential for the local community to have the use of the Duchray road during flooding for emergency and essential access purposes. The FLS have refused to grant the use of this road in such circumstances and based their decision on non-specifically justified reasoning.

Q16. Please suggest any changes you would make to these priorities

FLSD to grant unhindered passage of local Strathard population and to emergency services to the Duchray Road from Kinlochard to Aberfoyle when the B829 road is flooded as a priority.

Aberfoyle

Q17. Do you agree with these top 3 priorities for Aberfoyle? Mobility/Visitor Hub Flood Management Affordable Housing

Strongly agree

Kinlochard

Q19. Do you agree with the top 3 priorities for Kinlochard? Visitor Management Affordable Housing Infrastructure

Agree

Q20. Please suggest any changes you would make to these priorities

Add conservation of lochside views and beauty of the place.

Stronachlachar and Inversnaid

Q21. Do you agree with the top 3 priorities for Stronachlachar and Inversnaid? Signage Infrastructure Renewable Energy/Carbon Neutral Travel

Agree

Q22. Please suggest any changes you would make to these priorities

Wildlife conservation is very important. The LL&TNP Committee on Deer Management Committee is a very valuable contributor but it needs to control the FLS extermination of deer , product of many years of poor deer management .and effective game control.

Delivery plan

Q23. Do you agree we have the correct timescales and proposed lead organisations?

Some of it needs to be brought forward with investment or it will all be lost.

Q24. Please let us know which projects (maximum 2) you think should definitely happen in the next two years

Establishing a proper HUB for tourists away from existing urban development and lochside environment but accessible to same.

Response 4 - Resident

Q1. In what capacity you are responding to this survey?

As a resident in Strathard

Pathway to change

Q2. Do you think we have captured the main changes on the pathway diagram (Page 6) that need to happen to decarbonise the area and increase the population so it is sustainable and thriving?

No

Please explain your answer or add any comments or thoughts

I'm concerned that no reference to the expected need to change from oil and LPG boilers to electricity based systems in the not too distant future. The government has already announced phasing these out. That, as well as the increased number of e-charging points across the area, is going to put a strain on our electricity supply for the area - which is quite a fundamental infrastructure issue, but is not mentioned at all?

Q3. Do you have any other suggestions for key milestones to include here or any milestones you would wish to see removed?

I think key milestones are the phasing out of oil and gas boilers and the phasing out of ICE cars as that will lead to transformative change for the area.

Q4. What are your views on any risks or unintended consequences of this pathway?

If we focus just on the small things then any improvements made could be wiped out by the bigger transformative changes.

Vision

Q6. The proposed vision is: "Strathard is a tranquil landscape and climate resilient place of outstanding natural beauty, with strong cultural heritage and cohesion. The area acts as a carbon sink while supporting biodiversity, recreation and local communities' self-sufficiency. Outdoor access and eco-tourism work alongside a balanced visitor management approach and a diverse local economy to support the protection and promotion of this diverse and connected eco-system and the well-being of local people and visitors. Nature based solutions are used to manage flooding, improve and enhance infrastructure and facilities." Do you agree with the wording of this vision?

Agree

Please add any comments to explain your answer

I like the inclusion of nature based solutions.

Area wide strategy - map

Q8. The area wide strategy covers wider land use change but also covers visitor management and issues relevant to all communities. The map shows the projects underway but also opportunities for where new tree planting, natural flood management and peatland restoration could take place and recreational routes that could be improved/joined up/promoted – aqueduct trail and the Ben Lomond long distance mountain bike route. Does the map capture all the strategic change needed in Strathard?

No

Please add any comments to explain your answer

I worry about the area as a whole being overwhelmed with visitors and there not being enough infrastructure (eg toilets and car parks to support this. I'm not convinced the framework and map currently reassure me about this. Has it been missed?

Q9. Please provide any suggested changes to this map

Should there be some mention of new car parks or new facilities. Shouldn't we be looking at the area including Dukes Pass and Loch Katrine?

Area wide strategy - map

Q10. Do you agree with the priorities for the overall area?

Disagree

Q11. If you disagree, please tell us why.

I think there should be a priority about the community being a vibrant, active and sustainable community otherwise we get lost in the needs for visitors and the natural environment and forget about the needs of people who live here.

Landscape qualities and important views

Q13. The Framework has set out how views will be considered when a development proposal is being made – i.e. development in the foreground and middle ground of a view should not be overly intrusive, unsightly or prominent to the detriment of the view. Proposals in the background of the view should not harm the composition of the view in the context of landmarks – for example Ben Lomond or Church spire in Aberfoyle. For land use changes such as new woodland, where existing views will be unavoidably lost, other views should be identified and opened up. Do you agree with this approach?

Yes

Q14. The views have been collated from OS maps, visitor leaflets, walking guides, local knowledge and social media. Are there key views that need amended or removed or any key views that should be added?

I couldn't open up the map so I don't know what views were listed, but some viewpoints around Braeval area have become overgrown and so have been lost which is a shame.

The forest

Q15. Do you agree with these top 3 priorities for the Forest? Active Travel (walking/cycling routes) Heritage Paths/Aqueduct Path/Signage Renewable Energy

Strongly Agree

Please add any comments to explain your answer

It will be good if this means FLS will be working more closely with the community generally, and specifically with their plans for the forest and help the community put signage and new routes in.

Aberfoyle

Q17. Do you agree with these top 3 priorities for Aberfoyle? Mobility/Visitor Hub Flood Management Affordable Housing

Disagree

Please add any comments to explain your answer

I think there needs to be a priority about supporting the village to be a year round village - whilst it's nice to have some quieter months it does impact on what businesses can survive here.

Q18. Please suggest any changes you would make to these priorities

Add a new one "a Thriving Village "

Kinlochard

Q19. Do you agree with the top 3 priorities for Kinlochard? Visitor Management Affordable Housing Infrastructure

Neutral

Stronachlachar and Inversnaid

Q21. Do you agree with the top 3 priorities for Stronachlachar and Inversnaid? Signage Infrastructure Renewable Energy/Carbon Neutral Travel

Neutral

Delivery plan

Q23. Do you agree we have the correct timescales and proposed lead organisations?

Not sure. I think that's a discussion to be had with those organisations.
If topics like public transport are being included then surely First Bus and Strathclyde Passenger Transport should be part of the delivery mix, if not the leads.

Q24. Please let us know which projects (maximum 2) you think should definitely happen in the next two years

Active Travel hub and Electric car club

Any final comments

Q25. Please provide any other comments on the content of the draft Framework

It's great that this is happening but we are a small community and it's hard to get everyone involved in things, let alone leading on things. Whilst the community has been great at getting small things done, I'm not sure how good we are at the big things, and involving/communicating with everyone. Leadership from the National Park or Council would be helpful, and some quick wins would be good.

Response 5 – Forth District Salmon Fishery Board & Forth Rivers Trust

Q1. In what capacity you are responding to this survey?

Other (please specify):

Forth District Salmon Fishery Board (has a statutory remit for the protection and enhancement of salmon and sea trout fishery) and Forth Rivers Trust

Pathway to change

Q2. Do you think we have captured the main changes on the pathway diagram (Page 6) that need to happen to decarbonise the area and increase the population so it is sustainable and thriving?

No

Please explain your answer or add any comments or thoughts

Generally the pathway diagram is very accessible. And well laid out.

We are concerned that whilst climate change and therefore de-carbonizing is extremely important that this does not capture the progress toward greater biodiversity and nature resilience. The upper path is defined as a change in population – the lower runs from habitats in unfavourable condition to Net Zero Carbon target which are not comparative.

We are concerned that the target for water is 'good ecological status' which we feel is a low bar and the National Park should be striving for greater than this. Another metric would be easier to manage and this could be benchmarked against Marine Scotland's Conservation of Salmon Regulations and juvenile fish status delivered via National Electrofishing Programme for Scotland. Salmon are a protected species and as a apex indicator will also demonstrate improved habitat for other species such as invertebrates and mammals e.g. otter.

Q3. Do you have any other suggestions for key milestones to include here or any milestones you would wish to see removed?

We would have liked to have seen the funding of natural flood management BEFORE funding of the engineers scheme or at least in parallel. As set out it looks like NFM solutions are an after thought rather than what would be ideal that NFM is the prime route and concrete only used to follow.

Q4. What are your views on any risks or unintended consequences of this pathway?

It is difficult to establish what the benchmarks are or baseline conditions so how will the change be evaluated. For instance the use of lots of concrete to install flood defences will increase the carbon footprint of the area significantly – does the area go into a minus scenario at that point?

Q5. Please add any other comments about this section of the draft Framework

Could Biodiversity Net Gain be used?

Vision

Q6. The proposed vision is: "Strathard is a tranquil landscape and climate resilient place of outstanding natural beauty, with strong cultural heritage and cohesion. The area acts as a carbon sink while supporting biodiversity, recreation and local communities' self-sufficiency. Outdoor access and eco-tourism work alongside a balanced visitor management approach and a diverse local economy to support the protection and promotion of this diverse and connected eco-system and the well-being of local people and visitors. Nature based solutions are used to manage flooding, improve and enhance infrastructure and facilities." Do you agree with the wording of this vision?

Agree

Area wide strategy - map

Q8. The area wide strategy covers wider land use change but also covers visitor management and issues relevant to all communities. The map shows the projects underway but also opportunities for where new tree planting, natural flood management and peatland restoration could take place and recreational routes that could be improved/joined up/promoted – aqueduct trail and the Ben Lomond long distance mountain bike route. Does the map capture all the strategic change needed in Strathard?

No

Please add any comments to explain your answer

Given 'slow the flow' is key to NFM measures as well as the reduction of acidification due to conifer plantations would it be possible to show the proposal for broadleaf buffer zones along the water courses? This would ensure that the correct decision making for changes is within the framework and also assist in the improvement of the water courses more generally ensuring any cross compliance.

Area wide strategy - map

Q10. Do you agree with the priorities for the overall area?

Disagree

Q11. If you disagree, please tell us why.

Priority 6 – as stated above we do not consider that good ecological status is good enough. The National Park should be looking for a higher status than this at least Excellent. There are difficulties with the use of the status under RBMP as it is spatial, very wide and does not therefore capture the requirements at species or habitat levels very well. It also has a presumption for sustainable development and therefore the thresholds for installation of Hydro schemes or buffer strips are set at a minimum rather than what might be deemed applicable within the National Park. We would rather see a more defined criteria as stated above which is based on rivers being able to support a suitable level of fish species set against a national benchmark – e.g. via the National Electrofishing Programme for Scotland.

Q12. Please add any other comments about these priorities or any changes you may also wish to see.

It would be good if angling was included as a recreational activity

Landscape qualities and important views

Q13. The Framework has set out how views will be considered when a development proposal is being made – i.e. development in the foreground and middle ground of a view should not be overly intrusive, unsightly or prominent to the detriment of the view. Proposals in the background of the view should not harm the composition of the view in the context of landmarks – for example Ben Lomond or Church spire in Aberfoyle. For land use changes such as new woodland, where existing views will be unavoidably lost, other views should be identified and opened up. Do you agree with this approach?

Yes

The forest

Q15. Do you agree with these top 3 priorities for the Forest? Active Travel (walking/cycling routes) Heritage Paths/Aqueduct Path/Signage Renewable Energy

Disagree

Please add any comments to explain your answer

A key priority should be to create buffer zones along rivers and other water courses to act as NFM and biodiversity corridors. Broad leaf species will create a larger carbon sink as well as added values for biodiversity and slow the flow.

We notice that hydro is being promoted – these always have an impact on a water course and often for limited energy generation. If they are to be promoted they should have conditions on them that income generated is used to support biodiversity net losses in other places. As a general principle we would not support hydro unless it is for a single property use as the infrastructure installed and the de-watered sections can have a profound impact on the landscape, drainage and scarring.

Q16. Please suggest any changes you would make to these priorities

Rivers are as important as wetlands however there is too much of an emphasis on the latter rather than repair and enhancement required to the former. Better location of trees and wider buffer strips will have significant improvement to resilience of flows in rivers including better water quality as well as quantity.

Aberfoyle

Q17. Do you agree with these top 3 priorities for Aberfoyle? Mobility/Visitor Hub Flood Management Affordable Housing

Neutral

Please add any comments to explain your answer

18. The river provides an excellent place for visiting anglers with the river and the lochs, it would be good to include this with cycling as a focus for recreation.

Kinlochard

Q19. Do you agree with the top 3 priorities for Kinlochard? Visitor Management Affordable Housing Infrastructure

Neutral

Please add any comments to explain your answer

It could be also be a hub for recreational anglers – not mentioned.

Q19. Do you agree with the top 3 priorities for Kinlochard? Visitor Management Affordable Housing Infrastructure

Also the lochs could be regulated under Bathing Waters Standards and that would ensure that they meet the best requirements for health and safety of swimmers etc. This would also be a selling point for visitors.

Stronachlachar and Inversnaid

Q21. Do you agree with the top 3 priorities for Stronachlachar and Inversnaid? Signage Infrastructure Renewable Energy/Carbon Neutral Travel

Neutral

Delivery plan

Q23. Do you agree we have the correct timescales and proposed lead organisations?

There is no plan or lead for the delivery of the improvements to the rivers/lochs. What is SEPAs role in the plan? Given that the water environment is cited a number of times as key to the plan overall this seems like a bit of an omission.

We, Forth Rivers Trust and Forth DSFB, are keen to support any proposals or indeed lead any that would be applicable.

Response 6 - Resident

Q1. In what capacity you are responding to this survey?

As a resident in Strathard

Pathway to change

Q2. Do you think we have captured the main changes on the pathway diagram (Page 6) that need to happen to decarbonise the area and increase the population so it is sustainable and thriving?

No

Please explain your answer or add any comments or thoughts

In terms of population, people are now leaving the Kinlochard area because of unsustainable numbers of visitors. There does not appear to be anything in the pathway concerning visitor management other than a shuttlebus feasibility survey. Whilst the perceived legal right under SOAC exists for visitors to take over every bit of public road and the community assets of Kinlochard, it is difficult to see how the community can continue to thrive. There is plenty room on Loch Ard for many more participants of water based activities, that is not the issue. The issue is that the perceived "authorised and proper" place to access the loch and to sit on its margins is Kinlochard Community field which is geographically in the centre of residential rural community.

More should be done to investigate the use of FLS areas for accessing the Loch. Shuttlebuses, may help to prevent further increase in cars but will not help the current situation, merely add non motorised visitors to the middle of a residential area in addition to every motorised visitor that can find somewhere to park. There needs to be honesty with visitor management and the honest answer is that numbers cannot be managed. So communities need to learn to live in harmony with the visitors and realise that it is an integral part of the area. Those moving in to the area should know that is what they are choosing to live in. After taking account of national demographics in terms of family size, there can be little reason for population decline other than more second/holiday rental home ownership as there are certainly no empty houses and a waiting list for both private and social rental properties.

We are fortunate that, currently the balance is not overwhelming and certainly in Kinlochard, any second home owners integrate and contribute to community life. However, this is a very fragile balance and, as prices increase, there is a real danger of the situation in the Stronie area, spreading down the Strath.

There is nothing in the pathway that makes any attempt to even recognise that we face a very real threat of turning into a population of relatively affluent retired folk, holiday lets and unoccupied second homes. A bit of affordable housing in Aberfoyle is not going to solve this fundamental threat. There may not be an answer and, like the visitor numbers, it is just something we have to sit back and let engulf us. There is also nothing in the pathway about sewage and yet the LLTNP video presentation that goes with this Framework says it is one of the main factors for poor water quality in some water bodies. Given the massive capital spend of public money that Scottish Water has just completed for the commercial enterprise of Forest Hills, it seems extraordinary that there is nothing in this pathway concerning sewage in the Loch Ard catchment. Are we to presume that the move to "good" water quality will be achieved purely with less conifer planting at riparian edges?

Q3. Do you have any other suggestions for key milestones to include here or any milestones you would wish to see removed?

I cannot see anything in the milestones that show how residents are going to get about in a car free area. It is one thing for the able to grab their bikes, e or otherwise and go to the village or further for a haircut or a wee message, but quite another to manage to carry any heavy or awkward purchases back with them. There also a fair number of residents who are not infirm but would not manage the walk and are certainly not safe on bicycles.

We are missing a milestone that educates how we rid ourselves of cars, or again, it will be a case of "it says it will happen so it will" with no practical help as to what the population should do to enable it. The same is true of the "all buildings move to renewables". We need education/research etc milestones to be reached before we are any where near reaching the milestones shown

Q4. What are your views on any risks or unintended consequences of this pathway?

Local non "renewable" fuel businesses go the wall. Those who cannot afford to change heating, are left in poor conditions. Further isolation of the less able as all is geared to "active transport".
Nothing to cover emergency access for residents - this is a big risk and mitigation should be included the pathway.

Q5. Please add any other comments about this section of the draft Framework

I know the comments above sound negative, but that is because I have not commented on the positives
It is laudable to have aspirations and goals, but it is also important the the population has a realistic understanding of what these aspirations mean in practice. I do think both the pathway and the indicative delivery plan need to build in education and research as a fundamentally important part of change

Vision

Q6. The proposed vision is: "Strathard is a tranquil landscape and climate resilient place of outstanding natural beauty, with strong cultural heritage and cohesion. The area acts as a carbon sink while supporting biodiversity, recreation and local communities' self-sufficiency. Outdoor access and eco-tourism work alongside a balanced visitor management approach and a diverse local economy to support the protection and promotion of this diverse and connected eco-system and the well-being of local people and visitors. Nature based solutions are used to manage flooding, improve and enhance infrastructure and facilities." Do you agree with the wording of this vision?

Strongly agree

Please add any comments to explain your answer

Outdoor access and eco-tourism work alongside a balanced visitor management approach and a diverse local economy to support the protection and promotion of this diverse and connected eco-system and the well-being of local people and visitors.

The number of visitors accessing the heart of the residential community of Kinlochard will continue to have a detrimental effect on the well being of the local people if there is no change to SOAC. There is nothing in the Framework that will help this situation.

One man's "balanced" is another man's "overwhelmed"

Also, please, please, please, take the current illustration of Strathard's vision out and replace it with something that actually relates to Strathard and its vision!!

If you are having hills, it is an easy job to make that hill Ben Lomond, recognisable by all and literally part of the "vision" as it can be viewed from just about every part of Strathard and dominates the landscape - ditch the non-descript hummocks! Ditch the seaside cliffs and lighthouse, even as the crow flies we are nearly 40 km from the nearest sea loch.

Why are there 3 identical huts in the vision? Is this what we are all to live in? Or is this the new holiday village that is so important it has to feature as the most important part of the vision? Why have the main folk featured as a middle to old aged couple? My vision would be of young families living in homes, not huts and it is totally wrong and not any part of the framework to ditch conifers from the whole of Strathard. This illustration simply does not have any bearing on where we live either now nor if all pathways come to fruition. Please, please, redo it or don't have an illustration. This current one is deeply offensive.

Nature based solutions are used to manage flooding, improve and enhance infrastructure and facilities."
I don't understand what this means - what nature based solutions are there for improving and enhancing infrastructure and facilities and what is the infrastructure and facilities

Q7. If you disagree, please add any suggestions for how you think it should be changed

The rephrase below has two important aspects from the current phrase

1 It acknowledges the local people themselves are part of protecting

2 It puts the local people in the forefront of the vision as the Framework is meant to be their plan and thus if the vision cannot concentrate on them in this part of the planning process, when can it??

The local people and a diverse local economy support, promote and protect the diverse and connected ecosystem.

Effective management of outdoor access, eco-tourism and visitors ensures the wellbeing of local people

Area wide strategy - map

Q8. The area wide strategy covers wider land use change but also covers visitor management and issues relevant to all communities. The map shows the projects underway but also opportunities for where new tree planting, natural flood management and peatland restoration could take place and recreational routes that could be improved/joined up/promoted – aqueduct trail and the Ben Lomond long distance mountain bike route. Does the map capture all the strategic change needed in Strathard?

No

Please add any comments to explain your answer

Have put into FLS consultation, making the South ridges of Loch Ard more easily accessed by local people - this not to be a wide, easy access, just a couple of subtly indicated pathways that facilitate access to the open hill with no barring by deer fence

The zone for visitor pressure does not go far enough on the Kinlochard map. The pressure is felt by residents and local traffic along the length of the B829 along the Loch

There is particular pressure from the Glassert onwards and particularly round Altskeith and the Scottish Water water treatment works. The area should also be extended into the village of Kinlochard, right along to the sailing club

On the Aberfoyle map there is an area marked for redevelopment - is that the area that was pre-fab houses?

The riverside car park is not big enough to have all the changes mentioned on Priority one without cutting down on parking space which is already often oversubscribed. I would hope that the area for "redevelopment" could be developed as a longer stay ie day, for bikes/walkers etc and this would take the pressure off the main car park.

Q9. Please provide any suggested changes to this map

See Above

Area wide strategy - map

Q10. Do you agree with the priorities for the overall area?

Neutral

Q11. If you disagree, please tell us why.

Priority 5 is probably too low for emergency access through the forest for Kinlochard

It has also disappeared as a priority when you get to page 31 Priorities for Kinlochard

Again this has been put forward by the community consultation body in reply to WLALMP draft

Q11. If you disagree, please tell us why.

proposals and is deeply troubling and a very important priority. Recent events have raised awareness of the fragility of properties along the B289 and an apparent change in the traditional resilience routes in an emergency have made the people in these properties feel very vulnerable and also fearful.

Q12. Please add any other comments about these priorities or any changes you may also wish to see.

Again have put into FLS consultation on West Loch Ard LMP that Loch Ard Local History Group strongly approve of improving links to heritage in the forest and also would love to see the aqueduct trial restored.

Where do the opportunities exist to consolidate and enhance facilities at Loch Ard for camping, kayaking, paddle boarding, swimming (just swimming is the only word needed) fishing and picnicking? I would like to see Loch Ard removed from this as any consolidation would involve the Community Filed which is already overwhelmed and any enhancement, unless on FLS land at the East end of Loch Ard, would add to the unsustainable traffic problems in Kinlochard and on the B829.

Landscape qualities and important views

Q13. The Framework has set out how views will be considered when a development proposal is being made – i.e. development in the foreground and middle ground of a view should not be overly intrusive, unsightly or prominent to the detriment of the view. Proposals in the background of the view should not harm the composition of the view in the context of landmarks – for example Ben Lomond or Church spire in Aberfoyle. For land use changes such as new woodland, where existing views will be unavoidably lost, other views should be identified and opened up. Do you agree with this approach?

Yes

Please add any comments to explain your answer

But, the fact that the iconic view from the road as Loch Arklet comes into view, must never be lost. The efforts that the community had to go to ensure the continuity of this view was immense. Support came in from all over the world and this must be kept.

The upshot being that the words of the Framework are easy to say and seem to cover things but sometimes it is not the case and when views are possibly at stake, there should be community awareness so that those that live here and are often more aware of "hidden" benefits than those who don't live here, can comment and ensure a wrong decision is not made

Q14. The views have been collated from OS maps, visitor leaflets, walking guides, local knowledge and social media. Are there key views that need amended or removed or any key views that should be added?

The view where the forest track crosses the Bruach Caorainn burn is iconic and on a good day you can see right down the Strath, past Stirling Castle and on to the Forth, well worth keeping free from obstacle.

The view from the forest behind Gartnerichnich. This is recently cleared and affords views up to Ben Lomond in the South West and down Loch Ard and the Southern ridge. The views and the angles they afford are unique and cannot be achieved from any other vantage point

A little bit in the LMP "using book" could allow for a wee bit of strategic felling when the trees grow up, which would enable the views . It need only be from a very limited, but accessible by path, area.

The forest

Q15. Do you agree with these top 3 priorities for the Forest? Active Travel (walking/cycling routes) Heritage Paths/Aqueduct Path/Signage Renewable Energy

Agree

Please add any comments to explain your answer

Agree with most and would support however, care and caution are required before proliferating RoR Schemes

There is a lot of on going research that shows it is far from 100% clear that RoR is "all good"

Therefore, there is an immediate need to improve further the current understanding of the impacts induced by such hydropower schemes to provide practical and sustainable solutions

The most common reported ecological impacts are: flow regime alteration, water depletion in the bypass reach, loss of longitudinal connectivity, fish injuries, habitat degradation, and fish/macroinvertebrates community composition simplification.

Before adding to the RoR stock, can we be assured and have sight of, current monitoring regime and results from both the FLS local scheme and the Ledard scheme?

Also not at all convinced Biomass is "all good"

Q16. Please suggest any changes you would make to these priorities

as above

Aberfoyle

Q17. Do you agree with these top 3 priorities for Aberfoyle? Mobility/Visitor Hub Flood Management Affordable Housing

Agree

Please add any comments to explain your answer

have mentioned in previous sections

Kinlochard

Q19. Do you agree with the top 3 priorities for Kinlochard? Visitor Management Affordable Housing Infrastructure

Agree

Please add any comments to explain your answer

Do we need to have a picture of that horrible and totally not in keeping with Kinlochard, electric gate monstrosity?

As previous area on map for visitor pressure needs expanded

The camping opportunity on the map is already outwith the CMZ , not keen on any further "official camping", there is enough mess and damage on the current permitted sites. There is still no policing to enforce the Island as part of the CMZ, if that is still not working, please don't add to it.

Thus don't like this as a potential site but not necessarily against all small scale tourism out with village envelope

Why keep in an expired planning permission viz FH staff, there are expired planning permissions at Ard Ross and at Altskeith for houses, seems a bit odd?!

If you take that out, you will have room to put the FH sewage works there rather than on Loch Ard Cottage.

Visitor Management, waste water- see previous comments

Beware biomass and RoR being automatically "all good"

Stronachlachar and Inversnaid

Q21. Do you agree with the top 3 priorities for Stronachlachar and Inversnaid? Signage Infrastructure Renewable Energy/Carbon Neutral Travel

Disagree

Please add any comments to explain your answer

Please overrule if residents actually wanted their top priority in life to be signage to help them navigate between key points of interest

I would think most know their way about and would consider Infrastructure as their key priority

Difficult to see how there can be any increase in traffic on the road network as would be the case if more visitor promotion

has anybody looked at the statistics of how many vehicles come off the road as it is?

Delivery plan

Q23. Do you agree we have the correct timescales and proposed lead organisations?

See previous comments on timescales and projects
in the list of subgroups would add :-
Nominated Community Group for FLS consultations
Kinlochard Village Hall

Q24. Please let us know which projects (maximum 2) you think should definitely happen in the next two years

Affordable Housing naturally combines with site & building audit as one project
Community Resilience - no project in for this overall priority 5 and missed entirely from Kinlochard priorities - Need to find a solution to emergency access for residents on B829 in the very short term

Any final comments

Q25. Please provide any other comments on the content of the draft Framework

Community consultation is never easy and you are to be congratulated for achieving any consensus or involvement at all

There is nothing so terrible in the framework that would make anybody want to tear it up - except of course the illustration of the vision of Strathard!!

All plans are taking the area in the right direction against a background of increasing visitor numbers and water based activities throughout GB (and probably Europe for all I know)

I do believe there is no solution to visitor numbers in so much as most residents just want them to go away in terms of their residential area - not in terms of hubs where there are attractions and facilities for them to feed into the economy.

The fact is they will not be going away anytime soon and residents and visitors are going to have to come to terms with getting on.

Payback for residents can probably not be any less than "no increase on current" and pay back for visitors is probably going to be carry on as now

This takes the current situation, in Kinlochard at any rate as, very little litter, very little rowdiness, problematic parking and a very few antisocial folk not being bothered to leave if they need the toilet.

As far heading to a greener place, anything we can do is to be welcomed. This must, however, be against a background of well researched and proven initiatives.

It is very easy for all to jump on the easiest band wagon as happened with diesel being the promoted

Q25. Please provide any other comments on the content of the draft Framework

panacea

If this can happen at national Government level, it can certainly happen very easily at local community level

FLS and SW must continue to engage with the Strathard Community and should be encouraged to facilitate as many initiatives that directly benefit the community as possible. The land they manage belongs to "us" and they are also a big and much loved part of "the Community". It is hoped that relationships will continue to develop and improve.

The same holds true of LLTNP, who have a difficult job with visitor management. It is sad that they are sometimes having to concern themselves more with being litter and traffic police than in working to ensure the beauty we are surrounded by remains so. Again it is a two way process with the community, those of us who live here cannot lock it all away as "ours" and it is part of LLTNP job to make sure others enjoy it. As long as progress continues with both sides having an appreciation of the others point of view, there is more likelihood of finding sustainable long term solutions to the various problems facing all of us.

Response 7 - Resident

Q1. In what capacity you are responding to this survey?

As a resident in Strathard

Pathway to change

Q2. Do you think we have captured the main changes on the pathway diagram (Page 6) that need to happen to decarbonise the area and increase the population so it is sustainable and thriving?

Yes

Please explain your answer or add any comments or thoughts

The focus on decarbonisation and sustainable population growth is important

Q4. What are your views on any risks or unintended consequences of this pathway?

Population growth without adequate and commensurate improvements to public transport infrastructure will lead to increased traffic, which is not desirable. Even with electric vehicles, traffic growth will lead to increased pollution and land take.

Vision

Q6. The proposed vision is: "Strathard is a tranquil landscape and climate resilient place of outstanding natural beauty, with strong cultural heritage and cohesion. The area acts as a carbon sink while supporting biodiversity, recreation and local communities' self-sufficiency. Outdoor access and eco-tourism work alongside a balanced visitor management approach and a diverse local economy to support the protection and promotion of this diverse and connected eco-system and the well-being of local people and visitors. Nature based solutions are used to manage flooding, improve and enhance infrastructure and facilities." Do you agree with the wording of this vision?

Strongly agree

Area wide strategy - map

Q8. The area wide strategy covers wider land use change but also covers visitor management and issues relevant to all communities. The map shows the projects underway but also opportunities for where new tree planting, natural flood management and peatland restoration could take place and recreational routes that could be improved/joined up/promoted – aqueduct trail and the Ben Lomond long distance mountain bike route. Does the map capture all the strategic change needed in Strathard?

Yes

Area wide strategy - map

Q10. Do you agree with the priorities for the overall area?

Agree

Landscape qualities and important views

Q13. The Framework has set out how views will be considered when a development proposal is being made – i.e. development in the foreground and middle ground of a view should not be overly intrusive, unsightly or prominent to the detriment of the view. Proposals in the background of the view should not harm the composition of the view in the context of landmarks – for example Ben Lomond or Church spire in Aberfoyle. For land use changes such as new woodland, where existing views will be unavoidably lost, other views should be identified and opened up. Do you agree with this approach?

Yes

The forest

Q15. Do you agree with these top 3 priorities for the Forest? Active Travel (walking/cycling routes) Heritage Paths/Aqueduct Path/Signage Renewable Energy

Agree

Aberfoyle

Q17. Do you agree with these top 3 priorities for Aberfoyle? Mobility/Visitor Hub Flood Management Affordable Housing

Strongly agree

Please add any comments to explain your answer

As part of the mobility hub, there needs to be a focus on improving public transport links to Aberfoyle from outside the area, and not just consider travel within Strathard

Kinlochard

Q19. Do you agree with the top 3 priorities for Kinlochard? Visitor Management Affordable Housing Infrastructure

Agree

Please add any comments to explain your answer

The scope for additional affordable housing, apart from identified sites near Forest Hills, are very limited without compromising other elements of the plan.

Stronachlachar and Inversnaid

Q21. Do you agree with the top 3 priorities for Stronachlachar and Inversnaid? Signage Infrastructure Renewable Energy/Carbon Neutral Travel

Agree

Delivery plan

Q24. Please let us know which projects (maximum 2) you think should definitely happen in the next two years

Broadband mast in Kinlochard
Mobility hub in Aberfoyle

Response 8 - Resident

Q1. In what capacity you are responding to this survey?

As a resident in Strathard

Pathway to change

Q2. Do you think we have captured the main changes on the pathway diagram (Page 6) that need to happen to decarbonise the area and increase the population so it is sustainable and thriving?

Don't know

Please explain your answer or add any comments or thoughts

I don't think enough priority is being given to the desperate need for affordable housing in the area. Countless properties here are holiday lets and residents wait many many years to be able to secure an affordable home. Community seems to come second to attracting visitors.

Q3. Do you have any other suggestions for key milestones to include here or any milestones you would wish to see removed?

Rather than a survey about active transport, I'd like to see cars banned far more quickly than just hoping folk will opt in to an active or public transport option. We really could be a model for shifting the dominance of individual car transport.

Vision

Q6. The proposed vision is: "Strathard is a tranquil landscape and climate resilient place of outstanding natural beauty, with strong cultural heritage and cohesion. The area acts as a carbon sink while supporting biodiversity, recreation and local communities' self-sufficiency. Outdoor access and eco-tourism work alongside a balanced visitor management approach and a diverse local economy to support the protection and promotion of this diverse and connected eco-system and the well-being of local people and visitors. Nature based solutions are used to manage flooding, improve and enhance infrastructure and facilities." Do you agree with the wording of this vision?

Neutral

Please add any comments to explain your answer

I'd like to see strong community cohesion rather than strong cultural heritage & cohesion, where is the community?

Area wide strategy - map

Q8. The area wide strategy covers wider land use change but also covers visitor management and issues relevant to all communities. The map shows the projects underway but also opportunities for where new tree planting, natural flood management and peatland restoration could take place and recreational routes that could be improved/joined up/promoted – aqueduct trail and the Ben Lomond long distance mountain bike route. Does the map capture all the strategic change needed in Strathard?

Yes

Area wide strategy - map

Q10. Do you agree with the priorities for the overall area?

Agree

Landscape qualities and important views

Q13. The Framework has set out how views will be considered when a development proposal is being made – i.e. development in the foreground and middle ground of a view should not be overly intrusive, unsightly or prominent to the detriment of the view. Proposals in the background of the view should not harm the composition of the view in the context of landmarks – for example Ben Lomond or Church spire in Aberfoyle. For land use changes such as new woodland, where existing views will be unavoidably lost, other views should be identified and opened up. Do you agree with this approach?

Don't know

Aberfoyle

Q17. Do you agree with these top 3 priorities for Aberfoyle? Mobility/Visitor Hub Flood Management Affordable Housing

Agree

Q18. Please suggest any changes you would make to these priorities

accessible community growing spaces, allotments and affordable (social) eco housing

Kinlochard

Q19. Do you agree with the top 3 priorities for Kinlochard? Visitor Management Affordable Housing Infrastructure

Agree

Stronachlachar and Inversnaid

Q21. Do you agree with the top 3 priorities for Stronachlachar and Inversnaid? Signage Infrastructure Renewable Energy/Carbon Neutral Travel

Strongly agree

Delivery plan

Q23. Do you agree we have the correct timescales and proposed lead organisations?

Far too long for aiming to be car free

Q24. Please let us know which projects (maximum 2) you think should definitely happen in the next two years

affordable housing

Response 9 -Visitor

Q1. In what capacity you are responding to this survey?

Other (please specify):

Regular visitor to Strathard for outdoor activities and wild area enjoyment

Pathway to change

Q2. Do you think we have captured the main changes on the pathway diagram (Page 6) that need to happen to decarbonise the area and increase the population so it is sustainable and thriving?

No

Please explain your answer or add any comments or thoughts

Conservation of existing native peat and woodland should be a priority, therefore sheep and deer grazing should be radically reduced. Do feral goats have as much impact on the area as deer and sheep?
Active transport for all users needs considered otherwise traffic pressures will continue.
Beaver introduction would support natural flood protection.

Q4. What are your views on any risks or unintended consequences of this pathway?

Increased numbers of visitors without adequate infrastructure (eg campsites without appropriate low impact transport to them).

Vision

Q6. The proposed vision is: "Strathard is a tranquil landscape and climate resilient place of outstanding natural beauty, with strong cultural heritage and cohesion. The area acts as a carbon sink while supporting biodiversity, recreation and local communities' self-sufficiency. Outdoor access and eco-tourism work alongside a balanced visitor management approach and a diverse local economy to support the protection and promotion of this diverse and connected eco-system and the well-being of local people and visitors. Nature based solutions are used to manage flooding, improve and enhance infrastructure and facilities." Do you agree with the wording of this vision?

Agree

Please add any comments to explain your answer

Vision should include objective of maintaining wildness and rewilding where possible

Area wide strategy - map

Q8. The area wide strategy covers wider land use change but also covers visitor management and issues relevant to all communities. The map shows the projects underway but also opportunities for where new tree planting, natural flood management and peatland restoration could take place and recreational routes that could be improved/joined up/promoted – aqueduct trail and the Ben Lomond long distance mountain bike route. Does the map capture all the strategic change needed in Strathard?

No

Please add any comments to explain your answer

Would like to see appropriate provision made for low impact water users eg swimming, paddle sports.

Q9. Please provide any suggested changes to this map

Improved access around loch ard, chon & Katrine for low impact water users. Eg could shuttle transport take these users from aberfoyle to designated launch points?

Area wide strategy - map

Q10. Do you agree with the priorities for the overall area?

Agree

Landscape qualities and important views

Q13. The Framework has set out how views will be considered when a development proposal is being made – i.e. development in the foreground and middle ground of a view should not be overly intrusive, unsightly or prominent to the detriment of the view. Proposals in the background of the view should not harm the composition of the view in the context of landmarks – for example Ben Lomond or Church spire in Aberfoyle. For land use changes such as new woodland, where existing views will be unavoidably lost, other views should be identified and opened up. Do you agree with this approach?

No

Please add any comments to explain your answer

Existing skyline views should not be impacted by changes

The forest

Q15. Do you agree with these top 3 priorities for the Forest? Active Travel (walking/cycling routes) Heritage Paths/Aqueduct Path/Signage Renewable Energy

Disagree

Please add any comments to explain your answer

Top priority should be maintaining or reintroduction of wildness.

This can be done alongside other priorities eg beaver reintroduction for flood management

Q16. Please suggest any changes you would make to these priorities

Conversion to native woodland should be a priority - ban non native planting and restrict grazing.

Active travel should include water based activities eg swimming, Paddle sports.

Renewable energy is not a priority in this area. Very difficult to do this without impact even in short term.

Visitor management & traffic impact should be a priority and addressed not through banning but by providing right mix of facilities.

Aberfoyle

Q17. Do you agree with these top 3 priorities for Aberfoyle? Mobility/Visitor Hub Flood Management
Affordable Housing

Strongly agree

Kinlochard

Q19. Do you agree with the top 3 priorities for Kinlochard? Visitor Management Affordable Housing
Infrastructure

Agree

Stronachlachar and Inversnaid

Q21. Do you agree with the top 3 priorities for Stronachlachar and Inversnaid? Signage Infrastructure
Renewable Energy/Carbon Neutral Travel

Disagree

Please add any comments to explain your answer

Renewable energy should not be a priority here.
Need to consider visitor management here.

Response 10 – Countryside Trust

Q1. In what capacity you are responding to this survey?

As a charity or community group in Strathard

Pathway to change

Q2. Do you think we have captured the main changes on the pathway diagram (Page 6) that need to happen to decarbonise the area and increase the population so it is sustainable and thriving?

Yes

Please explain your answer or add any comments or thoughts

Yes, however we believe more should be done earlier in the pathway to reduce the number of visitors arriving by private car, such as a campaign and supporting programme of promoting alternative transport options. The development of a mobility hub has to be a principle early action.

Q3. Do you have any other suggestions for key milestones to include here or any milestones you would wish to see removed?

An early milestone for 2022 to ensure that the Aberfoyle (the hub) has coherent and well promoted and signposted active travel routes to nearby communities such as Gartmore, Callander, Brig o Turk, Port of Menteith and west to Inversnaid (with links to East Loch Lomond and the waterbus network). Some of these exist but many would benefit from upgrading and vastly improved signposting, mapping and information dissemination.

Improved information on how to get to the area without using the private car, safe and coherent active travel links between Aberfoyle and Stirling.

Q4. What are your views on any risks or unintended consequences of this pathway?

The pathway is seen as restrictive and acts as a barrier - it needs to be presented as an opportunity to support innovation and development. The limited influence on visitor behaviour and any negative impacts that visitors have on local communities. There needs to be an overall benefit to local communities.

Vision

Q6. The proposed vision is: "Strathard is a tranquil landscape and climate resilient place of outstanding natural beauty, with strong cultural heritage and cohesion. The area acts as a carbon sink while supporting biodiversity, recreation and local communities' self-sufficiency. Outdoor access and eco-tourism work alongside a balanced visitor management approach and a diverse local economy to support the protection and promotion of this diverse and connected eco-system and the well-being of local people and visitors. Nature based solutions are used to manage flooding, improve and enhance infrastructure and facilities." Do you agree with the wording of this vision?

Agree

Please add any comments to explain your answer

There is limited information in this statement about how people move around and access the area, this should be strengthened. There is a mention of recreation but more should be said about physical activity and active travel.

Q7. If you disagree, please add any suggestions for how you think it should be changed

see above

Area wide strategy - map

Q8. The area wide strategy covers wider land use change but also covers visitor management and issues relevant to all communities. The map shows the projects underway but also opportunities for where new tree planting, natural flood management and peatland restoration could take place and recreational routes that could be improved/joined up/promoted – aqueduct trail and the Ben Lomond long distance mountain bike route. Does the map capture all the strategic change needed in Strathard?

No

Please add any comments to explain your answer

More needs to be done to show Aberfoyle as a mobility hub, with coherent active travel links to adjacent communities and the wider active travel and sustainable travel networks.

Q9. Please provide any suggested changes to this map

Show the main active travel links from Aberfoyle to neighbouring communities

Area wide strategy - map

Q10. Do you agree with the priorities for the overall area?

Agree

Q12. Please add any other comments about these priorities or any changes you may also wish to see.

Walking and cycling is often portrayed as a "recreational" activity this needs to be strengthened so that is more of a functional activity (not just something for fun), where active travel is the "preferred" and most convenient and attractive means of getting around the area.

Landscape qualities and important views

Q13. The Framework has set out how views will be considered when a development proposal is being made – i.e. development in the foreground and middle ground of a view should not be overly intrusive, unsightly or prominent to the detriment of the view. Proposals in the background of the view should not harm the composition of the view in the context of landmarks – for example Ben Lomond or Church spire in Aberfoyle. For land use changes such as new woodland, where existing views will be unavoidably lost, other views should be identified and opened up. Do you agree with this approach?

Yes

The forest

Q15. Do you agree with these top 3 priorities for the Forest? Active Travel (walking/cycling routes) Heritage Paths/Aqueduct Path/Signage Renewable Energy

Strongly Agree

Aberfoyle

Q17. Do you agree with these top 3 priorities for Aberfoyle? Mobility/Visitor Hub Flood Management Affordable Housing

Strongly agree

Please add any comments to explain your answer

A mobility hub needs to be at the heart of improvements to public realm in Aberfoyle. The active travel network needs to be fit for purpose and a "showcase" of connecting communities and visitor attractions. Like wise the connections to sustainable transport need to be attractive, affordable, regular and convenient to use.

Q18. Please suggest any changes you would make to these priorities

That the mobility hub is obviously connected into a wider active travel network to adjacent communities such as Callander, Gartmore, Brig o Turk and Callander and that there is a safe active and direct active travel route between Aberfoyle and Stirling. Service provision at the mobility hub needs have regular, convenient and affordable public transport options that connect to key origins and destinations - such as the central belt as well as local visitor attractions.

Kinlochard

Q19. Do you agree with the top 3 priorities for Kinlochard? Visitor Management Affordable Housing Infrastructure

Neutral

Please add any comments to explain your answer

Many of the visitor management pressures are created by the excessive numbers of private cars. Much of this could be tackled further "downstream" by traffic management solutions such as reducing the number of vehicles entering the area and providing alternatives such as active travel and sustainable travel, this should be re-prioritised as a mobility hub solution.

Q20. Please suggest any changes you would make to these priorities

Many of the visitor management pressures are created by the excessive numbers of private cars. Much of this could be tackled further "downstream" by traffic management solutions such as reducing the number of vehicles entering the area and providing alternatives such as active travel and sustainable travel, this should be re-prioritised as a mobility hub solution.

Stronachlachar and Inversnaid

Q21. Do you agree with the top 3 priorities for Stronachlachar and Inversnaid? Signage Infrastructure Renewable Energy/Carbon Neutral Travel

Agree

Q22. Please suggest any changes you would make to these priorities

Strengthen the concept of Stronachlachar as a mobility hub the good connections both digital and physical into a range of mobility options such as shuttle buses, the water bus, e-bikes which are digitally connected into an effective and innovative MaaS (mobility as a service scheme) extending throughout the area.

Delivery plan

Q24. Please let us know which projects (maximum 2) you think should definitely happen in the next two years

1. Activating Aberfoyle as the hub and mobility hub
2. Signage plan and supporting information and marketing, particularly for active travel

Any final comments

Q25. Please provide any other comments on the content of the draft Framework

Overall well considered, measures to promote slow-tourism and to reduce the numbers arriving by low occupancy private vehicle seem light and need more emphasis.

Response 11 - Resident

Q1. In what capacity you are responding to this survey?

As a resident in Strathard

Pathway to change

Q2. Do you think we have captured the main changes on the pathway diagram (Page 6) that need to happen to decarbonise the area and increase the population so it is sustainable and thriving?

Yes

Please explain your answer or add any comments or thoughts

I think the timetable for the shuttle bus, charging for e bikes and e cars and renewable energy projects should be accelerated. It is projected to take a very long time to get these up and running

Q3. Do you have any other suggestions for key milestones to include here or any milestones you would wish to see removed?

Points for filling water bottles - to avoid plastic use - should be increased
Bins for recycling should be in position in areas where visitors concentrate

Vision

Q6. The proposed vision is: "Strathard is a tranquil landscape and climate resilient place of outstanding natural beauty, with strong cultural heritage and cohesion. The area acts as a carbon sink while supporting biodiversity, recreation and local communities' self-sufficiency. Outdoor access and eco-tourism work alongside a balanced visitor management approach and a diverse local economy to support the protection and promotion of this diverse and connected eco-system and the well-being of local people and visitors. Nature based solutions are used to manage flooding, improve and enhance infrastructure and facilities." Do you agree with the wording of this vision?

Agree

Please add any comments to explain your answer

We have the opportunity to proclaim ourselves Carbon negative. This is a big positive in the battle against Climate Change.

Area wide strategy - map

Q8. The area wide strategy covers wider land use change but also covers visitor management and issues relevant to all communities. The map shows the projects underway but also opportunities for where new tree planting, natural flood management and peatland restoration could take place and recreational routes that could be improved/joined up/promoted – aqueduct trail and the Ben Lomond long distance mountain bike route. Does the map capture all the strategic change needed in Strathard?

Yes

Area wide strategy - map

Q10. Do you agree with the priorities for the overall area?

Agree

Q11. If you disagree, please tell us why.

But more emphasis should be put on the importance of the measures in the battle against climate change - put it in a wider, national, perspective. And these should be accelerated

Landscape qualities and important views

Q13. The Framework has set out how views will be considered when a development proposal is being made – i.e. development in the foreground and middle ground of a view should not be overly intrusive, unsightly or prominent to the detriment of the view. Proposals in the background of the view should not harm the composition of the view in the context of landmarks – for example Ben Lomond or Church spire in Aberfoyle. For land use changes such as new woodland, where existing views will be unavoidably lost, other views should be identified and opened up. Do you agree with this approach?

Yes

The forest

Q15. Do you agree with these top 3 priorities for the Forest? Active Travel (walking/cycling routes) Heritage Paths/Aqueduct Path/Signage Renewable Energy

Agree

Please add any comments to explain your answer

If increasing visitor access much better management of the inevitable rubbish is required. More bins, including recycling bins, and collection of rubbish is required

Aberfoyle

Q17. Do you agree with these top 3 priorities for Aberfoyle? Mobility/Visitor Hub Flood Management Affordable Housing

Agree

Kinlochard

Q19. Do you agree with the top 3 priorities for Kinlochard? Visitor Management Affordable Housing Infrastructure

Agree

Stronachlachar and Inversnaid

Q21. Do you agree with the top 3 priorities for Stronachlachar and Inversnaid? Signage Infrastructure
Renewable Energy/Carbon Neutral Travel

Agree

Delivery plan

Q23. Do you agree we have the correct timescales and proposed lead organisations?

Timescales for shuttle bus, e charging and renewable energy should be accelerated

Q24. Please let us know which projects (maximum 2) you think should definitely happen in the next two years

shuttle bus
e charging
renewable energy
rubbish management

Any final comments

Q25. Please provide any other comments on the content of the draft Framework

Be more ambitious! Move faster!

Response 12 – Gartmore Community Trust

Q1. In what capacity you are responding to this survey?

Other (please specify):
GARTMORE COMMUNITY TRUST (NEIGHBOUR)

Pathway to change

Q2. Do you think we have captured the main changes on the pathway diagram (Page 6) that need to happen to decarbonise the area and increase the population so it is sustainable and thriving?

Yes

Q3. Do you have any other suggestions for key milestones to include here or any milestones you would wish to see removed?

Further development with local neighbouring community bodies such as Gartmore Community Trust to promote common aims and concerns such as flooding and protection of woodlands and wildlife

Vision

Q6. The proposed vision is: "Strathard is a tranquil landscape and climate resilient place of outstanding natural beauty, with strong cultural heritage and cohesion. The area acts as a carbon sink while supporting biodiversity, recreation and local communities' self-sufficiency. Outdoor access and eco-tourism work alongside a balanced visitor management approach and a diverse local economy to support the protection and promotion of this diverse and connected eco-system and the well-being of local people and visitors. Nature based solutions are used to manage flooding, improve and enhance infrastructure and facilities." Do you agree with the wording of this vision?

Strongly agree

Area wide strategy - map

Q8. The area wide strategy covers wider land use change but also covers visitor management and issues relevant to all communities. The map shows the projects underway but also opportunities for where new tree planting, natural flood management and peatland restoration could take place and recreational routes that could be improved/joined up/promoted – aqueduct trail and the Ben Lomond long distance mountain bike route. Does the map capture all the strategic change needed in Strathard?

Yes

Area wide strategy - map

Q10. Do you agree with the priorities for the overall area?

Strongly agree

Landscape qualities and important views

Q13. The Framework has set out how views will be considered when a development proposal is being made – i.e. development in the foreground and middle ground of a view should not be overly intrusive, unsightly or prominent to the detriment of the view. Proposals in the background of the view should not harm the composition of the view in the context of landmarks – for example Ben Lomond or Church spire in Aberfoyle. For land use changes such as new woodland, where existing views will be unavoidably lost, other views should be identified and opened up. Do you agree with this approach?

Yes

The forest

Q15. Do you agree with these top 3 priorities for the Forest? Active Travel (walking/cycling routes) Heritage Paths/Aqueduct Path/Signage Renewable Energy

Strongly Agree

Aberfoyle

Q17. Do you agree with these top 3 priorities for Aberfoyle? Mobility/Visitor Hub Flood Management Affordable Housing

Strongly agree

Kinlochard

Q19. Do you agree with the top 3 priorities for Kinlochard? Visitor Management Affordable Housing Infrastructure

Strongly agree

Stronachlachar and Inversnaid

Q21. Do you agree with the top 3 priorities for Stronachlachar and Inversnaid? Signage Infrastructure Renewable Energy/Carbon Neutral Travel

Strongly agree

Please add any comments to explain your answer

Resolve the access from Loch Katrine to Stronachlachar for tourism and the local residents

Delivery plan

Q23. Do you agree we have the correct timescales and proposed lead organisations?

Yes

Q24. Please let us know which projects (maximum 2) you think should definitely happen in the next two years

Flood prevention
Visitor management

Response 13 – Nature Scot

Q1. In what capacity you are responding to this survey?

As a partner organisation or public body operating in Strathard

Pathway to change

Q2. Do you think we have captured the main changes on the pathway diagram (Page 6) that need to happen to decarbonise the area and increase the population so it is sustainable and thriving?

Yes

Please explain your answer or add any comments or thoughts

Active travel infrastructure such as signage and e-bike charging points could be delivered sooner as this is a relatively 'quick win' with limited risk and labour. To deliver sustainable tourism and be proactive and ambitious, active travel should be a priority for the area.

Welcome the inclusion of nature-based solutions such as peatland restoration and creation.

Delivering longer term land use change on private estates (e.g. promoting increased herbivore management of INNS control) can be challenging but essential to improve habitats etc. across the whole area.

Q4. What are your views on any risks or unintended consequences of this pathway?

Risk not putting more emphasis on sustainable travel earlier on in the pathway. Climate change and biodiversity emergencies are urgent and early, proactive measures should be taken.

Concerned about the need for a consultation on goat culling is likely to raise significant public (and wider) concern. This is an ongoing and contentious subject in the wider area where many stakeholders have worked hard to find a delicate balance. Undertaking a further consultation could be challenging.

Vision

Q6. The proposed vision is: "Strathard is a tranquil landscape and climate resilient place of outstanding natural beauty, with strong cultural heritage and cohesion. The area acts as a carbon sink while supporting biodiversity, recreation and local communities' self-sufficiency. Outdoor access and eco-tourism work alongside a balanced visitor management approach and a diverse local economy to support the protection and promotion of this diverse and connected eco-system and the well-being of local people and visitors. Nature based solutions are used to manage flooding, improve and enhance infrastructure and facilities." Do you agree with the wording of this vision?

Agree

Please add any comments to explain your answer

Generally agree. Welcome the ambition to be climate resilient, however, greater emphasis could be given to biodiversity given the twin crises of climate change and biodiversity.

Whilst the second paragraph does recognise the need for eco-tourism, greater emphasis could be placed on sustainable outdoor access to nature.

Strongly support the inclusion of nature-based solutions.

Area wide strategy - map

Q8. The area wide strategy covers wider land use change but also covers visitor management and issues relevant to all communities. The map shows the projects underway but also opportunities for where new tree planting, natural flood management and peatland restoration could take place and recreational routes that could be improved/joined up/promoted – aqueduct trail and the Ben Lomond long distance mountain bike route. Does the map capture all the strategic change needed in Strathard?

Yes

Q9. Please provide any suggested changes to this map

The map could more explicitly show which routes/projects are already in place and which are proposed.
In line with the pathway, it would be useful for the Park to consider strategic locations for e-bike and electric vehicle charging points.

Area wide strategy - map

Q10. Do you agree with the priorities for the overall area?

Agree

Q12. Please add any other comments about these priorities or any changes you may also wish to see.

Priority 1 could be renamed “Sustainable Visitor Management and Infrastructure”.
Particularly welcome priorities on native woodland, natural flood management, landscape and peatland restoration. More detail could be provided on peatland restoration.

Landscape qualities and important views

Q13. The Framework has set out how views will be considered when a development proposal is being made – i.e. development in the foreground and middle ground of a view should not be overly intrusive, unsightly or prominent to the detriment of the view. Proposals in the background of the view should not harm the composition of the view in the context of landmarks – for example Ben Lomond or Church spire in Aberfoyle. For land use changes such as new woodland, where existing views will be unavoidably lost, other views should be identified and opened up. Do you agree with this approach?

Yes

Q14. The views have been collated from OS maps, visitor leaflets, walking guides, local knowledge and social media. Are there key views that need amended or removed or any key views that should be added?

Unable to get the interactive map to work.

The forest

Q15. Do you agree with these top 3 priorities for the Forest? Active Travel (walking/cycling routes) Heritage Paths/Aqueduct Path/Signage Renewable Energy

Agree

Q16. Please suggest any changes you would make to these priorities

Support the priorities. Could perhaps rename 'Active Travel' as the priority appears to be more focussed on recreation rather than 'travel'. However, we think it will be important to consider sustainable travel to/from Aberfoyle for these purposes.

Strongly support the land use priorities for natural flood management and peatland restoration. The consideration of nature-based solutions will be important for helping to achieve multiple objectives for the Strathard area.

Whilst sustainable tourism accommodation and development is recognised in relation to low impact and off-grid development under 'Other opportunities', we think there should be greater emphasis on delivering sustainable tourism more broadly.

Aberfoyle

Q17. Do you agree with these top 3 priorities for Aberfoyle? Mobility/Visitor Hub Flood Management Affordable Housing

Agree

Q18. Please suggest any changes you would make to these priorities

Strongly support the emphasis on nature based solutions to connect and enhance the local environment and ensure that flooding is managed in a holistic way. We would be happy to work with you to help shape these ideas.

It could be useful to update the map/key to be clearer. For example, it is unclear what the blue hatched area to the south of Aberfoyle is. In relation to the gravel bike routes proposed, it would be useful to clarify whether these will be new routes or whether they are existing routes with new signage proposed.

Welcome the ambition to create a new wetland to accommodate flood waters, providing multiple benefits for the wider environment and community.

We note the three sites which have been identified for affordable housing (however, the link to the interactive map does not appear to be working) and highlight that these, or any other options identified, will need to have gone through the SEA process. It will be important that any development proposals are coherent with existing development and positively contribute to the character of Aberfoyle.

The intention to deliver ecological enhancement is strongly supported.

In relation to economic development, it will be important to ensure that objectives and projects support a green economic recovery from the COVID-19 pandemic.

Kinlochard

Q19. Do you agree with the top 3 priorities for Kinlochard? Visitor Management Affordable Housing Infrastructure

Agree

Q20. Please suggest any changes you would make to these priorities

Strongly support the vision for Kinlochard, particularly the focus on climate resilience, sustainable tourism, active travel and community-led development.

Given the visitor pressure, particularly by private car, we welcome the identification of a lochside cycle route from Aberfoyle.

We support the three priorities identified. Given the climate change and biodiversity crises as well as the visitor pressure in the area via private car, we suggest changing to "Sustainable Visitor Management" to emphasise the need to find a balance between managing visitors and protecting and enhancing the environment for future generation. We think that the delivery plan should also reflect this to tackle the crises as well as work towards a green economic recovery from COVID-19.

The focus on infrastructure improvements to meet requirements is welcomed and we suggest that blue-green infrastructure is considered as well.

Support the land use priority relating to native woodland and the aim to further protect, manage and preserve the existing woodland setting of Loch Ard and new woodland areas.

Stronachlachar and Inversnaid

Q21. Do you agree with the top 3 priorities for Stronachlachar and Inversnaid? Signage Infrastructure Renewable Energy/Carbon Neutral Travel

Agree

Q22. Please suggest any changes you would make to these priorities

We support the three priorities set out, particularly the elements which encourage people to access nature using sustainable travel such as signage and electric car points as well as e-bike infrastructure highlighted under the Visitor Management opportunity.

Delivery plan

Q23. Do you agree we have the correct timescales and proposed lead organisations?

Yes, and we welcome our recognition as a member of the Partnership.

Q24. Please let us know which projects (maximum 2) you think should definitely happen in the next two years

- Masterplan village centre improvements / mobility hub at Aberfoyle
- Visitor Management Pressures in Kinlochard and The Forest

Q24. Please let us know which projects (maximum 2) you think should definitely happen in the next two years

Also support for Network of EV charging points for cars/bikes and Natural Flood Management at Aberfoyle

Any final comments

Q25. Please provide any other comments on the content of the draft Framework

Happy to discuss any of our comments further and advise where required.

Response 14 – Business (Steamship Sir Walter Scott Ltd and Steamship Sir Walter Scott Trust)

Q1. In what capacity you are responding to this survey?

Other (please specify):

A charity, business owner and land and facilities manager

Pathway to change

Q2. Do you think we have captured the main changes on the pathway diagram (Page 6) that need to happen to decarbonise the area and increase the population so it is sustainable and thriving?

No

Please explain your answer or add any comments or thoughts

The pathway chart is deficient as it fails to pick up the need for action relating to water based transport services on Loch Katrine and Loch Lomond which are key assets in the area. The current services are less than optimal due to Covid 19 impacts on the viability of the operators and also the future of the historic 121 year old Steamship Sir Walter Scott is under threat which is a major tourist asset in the area. Emphasis in pathway milestones travel options seem to major on cycle routes and shuttle bus feasibility when we would have thought strengthening waterbus services and supporting the reintroduction of a repaired steamship would feature as part of maximising the opportunities to travel about the area in sustainable and eco friendly ways.

Safeguarding the future of the north shore road at Loch Katrine for use by walkers, cyclists and local residents should also feature . The landslides several years ago threatened the future of this popular route and while a substantial investment has been made by Scottish Water to re-open the road this year the longer term future is uncertain as there are still thousands of tons of unstable material on the hills nearby and there is fresh evidence of landslides. It is important the plan reinforces the importance of safeguarding this route and simply waiting to the mid 2030s for trees to grow is not the only answer to safeguard the route. Mention earlier on in the pathway requires to be made -steps are taken to safeguard this future of this stragically important active travel route.

Q3. Do you have any other suggestions for key milestones to include here or any milestones you would wish to see removed?

Yes, as above we would like to see some milestones added relating to water based transport and the north shore road at Loch Katrine and the removal of the unrealistic point on car ownership declining by 40% which undermines the credibility of the plan.

Suggested additions:

2022-The historic Steamship Sir Walter Scott is saved and re-enters service providing transport services and cruises between Trossachs and Stronachlachar Piers as part of a wider improvements in water transport on both Loch Lomond and Loch Katrine.

2021 - The north shore road at Loch Katrine is re-opened following landslides and measures are in place to safeguard the long term future of this popular cycle and walking route.

Suggested removal:

2032-Car ownership declines by 40%. This is simply not going to happen and it is something the Plan has no control or influence over. Recent research indicates that car ownership is unlikely to decline with motorists simply switching to electric cars. In a couple of years more than 50% of cars will be electric and there is a surge in electric car purchases at the present time which so no signs of reducing overall car ownership. Also substantial growth in motorhome and electric bike ownership which have major implications for the plan area. The improved bus connections from Stirling and Glasgow mentioned are desirable but surely the aspiration should be achieving this well before 2032. Can this not be brought forward earlier in the pathway and linked to a substantial investment in shuttle services -land and water based -from the hub and mini-hub mentioned in the plan?

Q4. What are your views on any risks or unintended consequences of this pathway?

High risk of plan lacking credibility and achieving targets if car ownership reduction by 40% in ten years remains in the pathway document. Rather than burying heads in the sand in relation to car ownership the plan needs to reflect that there will be broadly the same level of car ownership but with switches from deisel and petrol to electric and hydrogen. Is the area going to be geared up to cope with this with sufficient electric charge points? What can be done to ensure one people arrive at the main hub of Aberfoyle or elsewhere on the approaches to the area, eg callander to make switches in transport modes more appealing. This will require serious investment. Simply wishing a substantial reduction in car transport and planning on this basis is a seriously flawed strategy and in our opinion will not help to address the pressing visitor management problems and opportunities in the area.

Disappointingly, there is also very little in the plan or the pathway about creating new and diversified local employment opportunities so it looks as if the area is planning for more of the same with no major step change in employment prospects to stem the flow of young people from the area.

Q5. Please add any other comments about this section of the draft Framework

The opportunity to contribute to the development of the framework at a workshop pre-COVID 19 was appreciated but the timing meant that very few representatives of the business community were involved. It is accepted efforts have been made to address the deficiencies arising from the previously developed life plans process which specifically excluded non-residents but who had stakeholder interests in the area through either the ownership or operation of businesses and are significant employment generators.

Milestones generally in the pathway could be stronger and more ambitious but appreciate being developed against a tight fiscal backdrop.

Map 1 could be improved as active travel corridors shown incomplete. Shows ferry crossing on Loch Lomond but no water based connection on loch Katrine which is a key feature and major attraction in the area. No reference to investment in water based transport as part of developing a well connected area with eco transport services. The draft framework and pathway generally underplay the importance of the lochs which are a major feature of the area. They should be coinsidered more than simply a scenic backdrop for land based activities.

Vision

Q6. The proposed vision is: "Strathard is a tranquil landscape and climate resilient place of outstanding natural beauty, with strong cultural heritage and cohesion. The area acts as a carbon sink while supporting biodiversity, recreation and local communities' self-sufficiency. Outdoor access and eco-tourism work alongside a balanced visitor management approach and a diverse local economy to support the protection and promotion of this diverse and connected eco-system and the well-being of local people and visitors. Nature based solutions are used to manage flooding, improve and enhance infrastructure and facilities." Do you agree with the wording of this vision?

Neutral

Please add any comments to explain your answer

Agree with paragraphs one and two but have difficulty with paragraph three as with the exception of flooding it is not clear what is meant by nature based solutions and how they would help.. improve and enhance infrastructure and facilities. What nature based solutions is the plan referring to that don't need major intervention. greater clarity required to secure support. Reads like a nice sound byte but what is the reality?

Q7. If you disagree, please add any suggestions for how you think it should be changed

Greater clarity of what is meant by nature based solutions for infrastructure and other improvements. We get it for flooding but not other improvements which require more blended solutions and interventions.

Area wide strategy - map

Q8. The area wide strategy covers wider land use change but also covers visitor management and issues relevant to all communities. The map shows the projects underway but also opportunities for where new tree planting, natural flood management and peatland restoration could take place and recreational routes that could be improved/joined up/promoted – aqueduct trail and the Ben Lomond long distance mountain bike route. Does the map capture all the strategic change needed in Strathard?

No

Please add any comments to explain your answer

Fails to pick up the theme of water-based transport (Loch Lomond and Loch Katrine) in any meaningful way with the emphasis on cycle routes, paths and pilot land-based shuttle bus services. Strategy fails to develop a vision for the lochs of the area yet there is a vision for the forest.

Also fails to pick up the measures need to safeguard the north shore road at Loch Katrine which is a major recreational asset

Target to reduce car ownership by 40% in the next 10 years is unrealistic (see comments earlier) which means the assumptions and measures planned on the visitor management front fall well short of what will be required. The area will continue to suffer from major visitor pressures. The plan touches on visitor management but is not radical enough to address the serious issues that are likely to face the area over the next 20 years and as highlighted at the workshops there needs to be a separately developed visitor management action plan based on more realistic assumptions about future trends-switch from diesel and petrol to electric cars with no real decline in car ownership; continued growth in ownership of campervans and motorhomes; an explosion in ownership of electric bikes, growth in walking and desire to be at lochsides or on lochs for recreational and relaxation purposes.

Q9. Please provide any suggested changes to this map

Invest in water-based transport (to go on map 1 as well)
Hub investment-it is not clear from the map what is planned. Is additional car parking part of the mix and if not, why not? If Aberfoyle is to be developed as a strategic hub where people are encouraged to change modes of transport then some additional serious investment in increasing car parking capacities is required as the village is currently struggling to cope with the influx of visitors.
Strengthening public transport links and services with the area is very desirable but there will be a reluctance for people to switch methods of travel to get here and this has been made worse by the impact of COVID 19 which will be with us for many years to come.

Area wide strategy - map

Q10. Do you agree with the priorities for the overall area?

Disagree

Q11. If you disagree, please tell us why.

Agree with most of the priorities identified with some qualifications plus the reason we ticked the 'disagree' box is due to there being no specific priorities relating affordable housing and creating additional employment opportunities which we consider are high area wide priorities. Are we missing something as priorities listed all seem to be land and visitor management related. We would have thought the priority relating to the lochs (water quality) could be broadened out to pick up the current and future potential role of some of the lochs as recreational and water-based transport assets.

Q12. Please add any other comments about these priorities or any changes you may also wish to see.

As above-affordable housing and increasing employment opportunities as part of developing a more inclusive and more resilient place to live and work. Strengthened lochs priority to cover more than simply improving the water quality.

Landscape qualities and important views

Q13. The Framework has set out how views will be considered when a development proposal is being made – i.e. development in the foreground and middle ground of a view should not be overly intrusive, unsightly or prominent to the detriment of the view. Proposals in the background of the view should not harm the composition of the view in the context of landmarks – for example Ben Lomond or Church spire in Aberfoyle. For land use changes such as new woodland, where existing views will be unavoidably lost, other views should be identified and opened up. Do you agree with this approach?

Yes

Please add any comments to explain your answer

Broadly but there are wider considerations than simply assessing the impact of views when determining a planning application including weighing up community benefits, increasing the viability of existing businesses and creating much needed long term employment opportunities in the area. If this approach had been adopted by the Victorians much of the infrastructure and housing in the area would not have been developed

Q14. The views have been collated from OS maps, visitor leaflets, walking guides, local knowledge and social media. Are there key views that need amended or removed or any key views that should be added?

Difficult to comment in detail as there are so many viewpoints in the area.

Seems light on north shore road of Loch Katrine which some cyclists who have travelled extensively described as a world class cycle route due to the ever changing spectacular views.

A key viewpoint above Trossachs Pier is missing-the historic Roderick Dhu Watchtower view where poets, writers and artists gathered to inspire their work on the appreciation of Trossachs landscapes which led to the birth of Scottish tourism. reinstatement of the path and an improved scenic lookout here currently the subject of a live planning application. Strange it is missing yet it is widely chronicled in paintings and postcards.

The forest

Q15. Do you agree with these top 3 priorities for the Forest? Active Travel (walking/cycling routes) Heritage Paths/Aqueduct Path/Signage Renewable Energy

Agree

Q15. Do you agree with these top 3 priorities for the Forest? Active Travel (walking/cycling routes) Heritage Paths/Aqueduct Path/Signage Renewable Energy

Please add any comments to explain your answer

Particularly welcome the plans for an Aqueduct pathway provided adequate plans for managing the route are in place as there are currently major deficiencies in managing and maintaining other routes in the area.

Q16. Please suggest any changes you would make to these priorities

Priority 2

Develop, promote and maintain heritage paths....

Aberfoyle

Q17. Do you agree with these top 3 priorities for Aberfoyle? Mobility/Visitor Hub Flood Management Affordable Housing

Agree

Please add any comments to explain your answer

Great potential to develop the village as a gateway/hub for the wider area but there will require to be investment in creating additional car parking capacity as the long term aspirational development of better public transport links with the central belt being seen as the solution is q

Q18. Please suggest any changes you would make to these priorities

uestionable. It might be part of the solution but there does require to be additional parking developed to cater for current and future needs.

Kinlochard

Q19. Do you agree with the top 3 priorities for Kinlochard? Visitor Management Affordable Housing Infrastructure

Neutral

Please add any comments to explain your answer

Seems to be a contradiction between priorities 2 and 3 in relation to housing. Pushing affordable housing development in the first instance to Aberfoyle in priority 2 when priority 3 indicates there is a potential site for around 10 houses at the existing waste water treatment works site. Danger is the water works site goes for open market housing and fails to address local affordable housing needs. We suggest policies are re-phased and tightened up.

Q20. Please suggest any changes you would make to these priorities

See above

Stronachlachar and Inversnaid

Q21. Do you agree with the top 3 priorities for Stronachlachar and Inversnaid? Signage Infrastructure
Renewable Energy/Carbon Neutral Travel

Agree

Please add any comments to explain your answer

Vision for area is generally sound but would benefit from including a reference to ...there are sustainable and eco friendly water transport services providing connectivity with the area via loch lomond and Loch Katrine....

There is an inaccurate reference to the steamship on p33. gives impression ...the area is now dominated by self-catering accommodation and scattered tourism business, including the steamship on Loch Katrine... Sadly the steamship has been out of action for 18 moths and its very future is currently under threat . It will be the subject of a major SOS (Save our Steamship) fundraising appeal shortly . It would be a major blow for the area if this iconic 121 year old vessel did not sail again and the consequences for Stronachlachar are quite significant.

Securing the future of the steamship should be a priority and could be woven into the second sentence in priority 3

Concerned as we were at the workshops and in correspondence about the statements relating to tourist accommodation. the long term future of the Pier cafe and the hub at Stronachlachar is currently under review and a key component of any future plan to improve the viability of the hub is the development of small scale glamping facilities. Providing camping and motorhome provision on their own is unviable and a glamping element which involves the provision of a small scale cluster of glamping lodges/units is considered to be important by the Steamship Trust as is the recently approved modest expansion and upgrade of the car park. Can the.for example.. be changed under the Sronachlachar/loch Katrine heading to read... small-scale motorhome and glamping....

Q22. Please suggest any changes you would make to these priorities

See above.

Sentence 2 in priority 3 to be modified to read: Support safeguarding the future of the historic Steamship Sir Walter Scott and promote the greater use....

Other opportunities under Stronachlachar/Loch Katrine heading second sentence to read... For example; small-scale motorhome and glamping to provide....

Delivery plan

Q23. Do you agree we have the correct timescales and proposed lead organisations?

In introduction the list of organisations should be extended to include should be extended to include the Steamship Trust and the Friends of Loch Lomond and The Trossachs. Steamship Trust due to interests as a manager and operator at Loch Katrine/Stronachlachar and Friends due to current active involvement in Trossachs Trail refresh , Trossachs Visitor Management Project and other initiatives in the area.

No detailed observations on timescales for delivery plan but hoping contents of plan will be modified to take account of missing pathway/strategy projects and priorities identified in this submission and other responses

Q24. Please let us know which projects (maximum 2) you think should definitely happen in the next two years

Visitor management but title should be changed as surely covers more than Kinlochard and the Forest-what about the lochs??
Aberfoyle mobility hub including review of infrastructure needs possibly leading to an RTIF bid. Somewhere here or in main document there needs to be acknowledgement of plans for the other hubs-Trossachs and Stronachlachar with plans approved for significant improvements earlier this year leading to a potential investment of over £500,000 in the next year. Where is this on the pathway chart for example and in working docs?

Any final comments

Q25. Please provide any other comments on the content of the draft Framework

Generally a fairly solid piece of work in difficult circumstances but needs to be rooted in reality and as highlighted earlier the reference to a reduction in car ownership of 40% in the next 10 years detracts from an otherwise sound document. Also as mentioned in a number of sections of this response the role and importance of the lochs in the area is underplayed. Some of the lochs are working lochs and provide enable important water based transport links to be provided and there is scope for this to be developed further as part of the eco tourism credentials of the area. This is understated in the document and should be addressed in the revised version.

Also not clear what the implications of the plan are resource wise. What is the scale of investment being sought over the plan period linked to scale of ambition- £10million, £100 million...?? Budgetary implications missing from indicative delivery plan in terms of people, revenue and capital resource commitments. This should be addressed too with broad indications of investment levels required.

Response 15 - Resident

Q1. In what capacity you are responding to this survey?

As a resident in Strathard

Pathway to change

Q2. Do you think we have captured the main changes on the pathway diagram (Page 6) that need to happen to decarbonise the area and increase the population so it is sustainable and thriving?

Yes

Vision

Q6. The proposed vision is: "Strathard is a tranquil landscape and climate resilient place of outstanding natural beauty, with strong cultural heritage and cohesion. The area acts as a carbon sink while supporting biodiversity, recreation and local communities' self-sufficiency. Outdoor access and eco-tourism work alongside a balanced visitor management approach and a diverse local economy to support the protection and promotion of this diverse and connected eco-system and the well-being of local people and visitors. Nature based solutions are used to manage flooding, improve and enhance infrastructure and facilities." Do you agree with the wording of this vision?

Neutral

Please add any comments to explain your answer

While I agree that the vision aligns well with community aspirations as expressed in the various Community Life Plans the words "and local communities' self-sufficiency." are not borne out in the strategies and priorities identified throughout the document. In other words there is no read through from these words to the actions which will be required to achieve the aim. This shortfall in the other parts of the document prevents me from being able to support the vision statement as it does not ring true and taken at face value indicates that the Framework will achieve its vision while clearly it cannot in its current form.

Q7. If you disagree, please add any suggestions for how you think it should be changed

The wording should stay but the how to deliver this element of the vision must be spelt out clearly in the priority and strategy sections of the Framework. There is a reference to 'a diverse local economy' is mentioned in the Strategy Summary, but this relates only to "Farm and Estate Diversification", and not to supporting community entrepreneurship and enterprise. Both economic diversification and community self-sufficiency are core elements of the Framework's Vision and the Community Life Plans. If they are not represented more strongly and clearly throughout the document, the Framework neither identifies nor shows how the Strategy or Priorities will achieve its holistic Vision.

Area wide strategy - map

Q10. Do you agree with the priorities for the overall area?

Disagree

Q11. If you disagree, please tell us why.

In "Priorities for the overall area" the first is Visitor Management, while Self-Sufficiency and Economic Diversification do not feature at all, but were core principles and priorities in the Community Life Plans. Without mention of these, it is difficult not to read the Framework's economic priorities as being driven by a Green Tourism agenda.

Q12. Please add any other comments about these priorities or any changes you may also wish to see.

The final priority is "Farm and Estate Diversification" and there is again an emphasis on tourism. This priority could be renamed "Economic Diversification" and include language which links it to the related point in the Strategy Summary, and which emphasises the community aspirations for self-sufficiency - community ownership, enterprise, energy and housing. This would go some way to linking the priorities to the Framework's Vision, balancing the emphasis on tourism as set out in the Vision (P11), and improving alignment with the Community Life Plans.

Landscape qualities and important views

Q13. The Framework has set out how views will be considered when a development proposal is being made – i.e. development in the foreground and middle ground of a view should not be overly intrusive, unsightly or prominent to the detriment of the view. Proposals in the background of the view should not harm the composition of the view in the context of landmarks – for example Ben Lomond or Church spire in Aberfoyle. For land use changes such as new woodland, where existing views will be unavoidably lost, other views should be identified and opened up. Do you agree with this approach?

Yes

Please add any comments to explain your answer

Views were mentioned as "Important Things" across all Community Life Plans, so this aspiration in the Framework is an excellent alignment.

However the Stronachlachar and Inversnaid Life Plan expressed strong consensus on two "iconic views" which carried significantly more weight than others. These were the views across of Loch Arklet from the East, and of Loch Katrine from the pier. On the basis of the importance of these "iconic views" to residents, and these appear to be missing from the map.

While it is good to see so many of Strathard's great viewpoints marked on the map also included are places identified as "Important Things" requiring protection and preservation in their present state. While the statement also included "Not all views are managed or require to be managed (as viewpoints) but all are publicly accessible and enjoyed by the public." introduces a level of ambiguity. To provide clarity between the 2 statements can the Framework identify any viewpoints which 'require to be managed' and / or any subsequent intention to 'manage' a viewpoint be put out for consultation via the SCC, to ensure no harm is caused inadvertently to a cherished place?

The forest

Q15. Do you agree with these top 3 priorities for the Forest? Active Travel (walking/cycling routes) Heritage Paths/Aqueduct Path/Signage Renewable Energy

Strongly Agree

Please add any comments to explain your answer

The vision and priorities align very well with those expressed for the forest areas in the Community Life Plans.

Aberfoyle

Q17. Do you agree with these top 3 priorities for Aberfoyle? Mobility/Visitor Hub Flood Management Affordable Housing

Disagree

Please add any comments to explain your answer

The Key Characteristics (P25) and Priority 1 (P27) communicate the impression that the vision for Aberfoyle is solely to develop it as a tourist hub. The overarching principle and strongest theme in the Life Plan was community sustainability in a holistic sense, including community self-sufficiency, economic diversification (away from tourism), and local provisioning of services, housing and employment opportunities for young people. This included an aspiration for local projects and enterprises under community leadership and ownership, such as were articulated in the exploration of the viability of a community buyout of the Coop. This conception of 'Sustainability' -a core element of the Framework Vision, and principle and theme of the Aberfoyle Community Life Plan- does not seem to be represented in the Framework's vision and priorities for Aberfoyle.

P26 The Aberfoyle Community Life Plan identified the sculpture park as a great attraction and asset, and opportunity for tourist development and improvement, but it does not appear on the map.

P27 Priority 1

The need for artwork and mini-play areas was not raised by any residents in the Community Life Plan process. I am interested in what prompted the inclusion of these in priority 1. On the other hand Improvements to existing play parks were suggested by many.

Q18. Please suggest any changes you would make to these priorities

Inclusion of a priority making extant reference to community sustainability in a holistic sense, including community self-sufficiency, economic diversification (away from tourism), and local provisioning of services, housing and employment opportunities for young people.

Kinlochard

Q19. Do you agree with the top 3 priorities for Kinlochard? Visitor Management Affordable Housing Infrastructure

Disagree

Please add any comments to explain your answer

P29 "New development opportunities are very limited in the immediate village environs and the Kinlochard Community Life Plan notes the priority to conserve areas of open land, rich in semi-wild and woodland habitats."

The statement is welcomed and an accurate reflection of the community's consensus and aspirations as expressed in their Community Life plan. However, we note that the Exclusion Zone 2, which encompasses most of these naturally-rich "areas" is not included on the map. As is articulated in the Community Life Plan, these are some of the only local areas unaffected by commercial forestry and so are rich in native ecology, including numerous protected species. As such, Exclusion Zone 2 aligns strongly with the aspiration for promoting the native ecology and biodiversity enhancement gains which underpin the Vision and Strategy. The addition of Exclusion Zone 2 would demonstrate support for a community priority which is fully in alignment with the overarching aims of the Framework, while its omission weakens the credibility of these.

Priority 1 Discusses visitor management and its impact on the quiet environs of Kinlochard without any strategy or actions on how the increasing numbers of visitors, which threaten to overwhelm the ability of the village to cope, might be mitigated or redirected elsewhere. As was articulated in their Community Life Plan, Kinlochard is an exception in the Strathard area in that the village is a thriving cohesive community which exists almost entirely independently of the tourist industry. It features no attractions or services, and significant concern was expressed by residents that any attempt to enable or promote Kinlochard as a tourist village, or as a location for affordable housing, could provoke a turning point and a fundamental

Q19. Do you agree with the top 3 priorities for Kinlochard? Visitor Management Affordable Housing Infrastructure

change in the character of the community from which there would be no turning back. It was this fear which underpinned the first principle in the Life Plan of “Strengthening Our Community”.

Q20. Please suggest any changes you would make to these priorities

In a holistic plan where every other Strathard community in their Life Plans supports the principles-led development of affordable community housing and tourism, there should be greater emphasis on a visitor management and housing strategy which seeks to redirect visitors and housing developers to areas of Strathard where these things are needed and welcome. Priority 1 could promote Loch Chon as a means of relieving pressure on Kinlochard to conserve the sensitive shores and flora and fauna and help maintain the tranquil nature of the village. As a minimum this would make the problems Kinlochard residents face, and their aspirations, official, which in turn may trigger mindful and corrective action within the context of a Strathard-wide visitor management strategy. With the exception of the Loch Ard Shore, the Exclusion Zones do not appear in the Framework, and particularly Exclusion Zone 2.

Stronachlachar and Inversnaid

Q21. Do you agree with the top 3 priorities for Stronachlachar and Inversnaid? Signage Infrastructure Renewable Energy/Carbon Neutral Travel

Disagree

Please add any comments to explain your answer

While references to self-sufficiency might be considered implicit in Priorities 2 and 3 and under Other Opportunities (specifically Housing/Economy), we believe it would benefit from being expressed more explicitly and strongly. The permanent resident community is in decline, with only one young family living locally. It is not too much to say that self-sufficiency and economic diversification were stressed in the context of them being an existential issue, where even a seemingly insignificant unsuitable development could have significant negative impacts.

An example of this was the development proposal for Stronachlachar Storehouse which got approval to proceed without any provision for affordable housing, despite this being expressed in their Community Life Plan as fundamental to local social and economic rejuvenation. There needs to be emphasis in the Framework which recognises the fragility of these remote communities, explicitly supports their autonomy, and can prevent planning decisions such as these.

Any proposed development should be able to demonstrate how it can contribute towards improving community facilities, active travel, bus service, waste water and broadband, as well as consolidating the existing tourism facilities if decline in this area is to be reversed. A lot of damage has been done and continues to endure as a result of changes to ways of living and working brought about by the decline of sheep farming and modernisation of Forestry and Waterboard working practices. Proactive intervention will be required to facilitate other opportunities to live and work year-round in these areas. These are well articulated by residents in their Community Life Plan and we believe they should receive appropriate emphasis in the Framework.

Q22. Please suggest any changes you would make to these priorities

In addition to weaknesses identified above with the priorities the map on page 34 identifies a development opportunity near the Garrison. The Garrison was identified as an “Important Thing” by residents, and an area where new development should not be carried out. The opportunity related only to the refitting of the abandoned visitor centre and car park there which could provide a small museum, reusing what is already in place not encouraging more development. The icon on the map does not

Q22. Please suggest any changes you would make to these priorities

and cannot make this clear so can we ask that this be removed to avoid any unintended consequences of generalising a very specific point.

Also not included are the Exclusion Zones, notably the “wild shores of Loch Arklet”, and which were equally important to local residents.

Delivery plan

Q23. Do you agree we have the correct timescales and proposed lead organisations?

I am concerned that the overall lead organisation for delivery of the Indicative Delivery Plan has been identified as the Strathard Strategic Partnership. This "partnership" has not met for some considerable time and is not universally known within the community. Does the organisation have terms of reference and ultimately who is it accountable to?

Q24. Please let us know which projects (maximum 2) you think should definitely happen in the next two years

While the projects listed in the plan are fairly pragmatic and are supported by findings in the Strathard Framework document the list stops short of addressing the very real need identified by the Community Life Plans in regard to promoting economic diversity in the community as a whole. There is no read through from the project list as a means of delivering the wider ambitions identified in the Strathard Framework Vision statement in regard to promotion of diverse community economic development.

The first named project “Masterplan village centre improvements / mobility hub” cites as a mode of delivery “Set up a steering group and commission consultant to prepare a design options for a mobility hub/public realm improvements, undertake consultation and funding.” There was a comprehensive Charrette study undertaken to support development of the current LLTNP Local Development Plan by Jura Consultants. Although produced in 2013 much of the work undertaken on behalf of the Aberfoyle element of the Charrette and identified in the Design section of the Charrette is still relevant today and supported by the recent Aberfoyle CLP engagement exercises as still being valid. Before re-commissioning a new study with all the implications of cost and getting sufficient community buy-in to make the study relevant the existing detailed and extensive Design report for Aberfoyle should be considered alongside the final outputs from the Aberfoyle CLP when they are to hand later this year. This would not only reduce costs but could make delivery accomplishable in a much shorter timescale.

The “Renewables / Heat Networks” suggests the delivery method “Set up a project group, undertake feasibility study looking into energy heat hubs, coppice for biomass, heat pumps, district heating, run-river hydro”. If this contained a reference along the lines of “and community ownership of land, assets and resources required to facilitate delivery” it would go some way to identifying the need for encouraging meaningful economic diversification for communities give recognition to work currently being undertaken by the community and would be an excellent project to get underway in the short term.

Any final comments

Q25. Please provide any other comments on the content of the draft Framework

I am strongly opposed to the numbering system used in the Priority sections scattered throughout the document.

The numbering of the priorities throughout the Framework suggests a rank ordering. In almost all the

Q25. Please provide any other comments on the content of the draft Framework

sub-areas, the top priorities relate to Visitor Management. Without qualification that the priorities are not to be read in this way -and I assume they are not- the interpretation is unavoidable. Moreover, if the interpretation is coupled with a statement on page 7, which appears below, it could also be construed that all stakeholders involved in the development of the Framework support the ranking:

“The framework sets out the strategy for Strathard as a whole and for four identified sub areas. Within each area the types of changes identified are described, alongside priorities for action that were agreed through engagement and discussion with key stakeholders.”

To avoid any suggestion of this can I suggest that all numbering is dropped, and each of the sub-group area priority pages are given the same title as “Priorities for Overall Area”. Making the heading for all priority pages the same will also give the document greater consistency. At the moment these pages are mixed with some sub-areas stating Top 3 Priorities and others not.

In my opinion the Framework needs to express to more strongly, clearly and explicitly support for the common desire across the communities of Strathard for greater autonomy, self-sufficiency, and economic diversification for the community and by the community (community ownership, enterprise, energy and housing). Long-term sustainability is an aim residents share with all stakeholders in the Strathard Framework, and these aspects are generally held and agreed by all of us to be a fundamental underpinning of this. Greater emphasis of these aspects, and nuance about what it means for each of the communities, I think would result in a more holistic and balanced document, which more consistently articulates how its Vision will be delivered through its Strategy and Priorities.

Response 16 - Resident

Resident

1. Do you think we have captured the main changes on the pathway diagram (Page 6) that need to happen to decarbonize the area and increase the population so it is sustainable and thriving?

It appears to have been assumed that “*increasing the population*” is both desirable in itself and essential to making the area “*sustainable and thriving*”. This is quite an assumption. It is also one for which no rationale or supporting evidence whatsoever is offered. I find this worrying; not least because - should this particular pillar prove as shoochy as it looks - the credibility of many of the better things within the *Draft Framework* may be damaged too.

An increase in population (particularly in a largely rural area where there has been historic decline such as the Highlands and Islands of Scotland) *can* be one indicator, amongst many, of community vitality - but that is a far cry from making it the principal aim of a small-scale local development strategy.

Of even greater concern perhaps is the statement with which “The Pathway” sets course for this aim by stating “*Strathard Population Declining*” - without any reference to the source of this claim or of the baseline any change is to be measured against.

There seems to be some disparity in population figures from official sources - Stirling Council gives 1237 for 2011 for Strathard Community Council area; LL&TNP *Community Action Plan* (2017-22) offers 1382 for 2011. I’ve tried and failed to get figures for “Strathard” on the census site itself but Aberfoyle is listed as 769 for 2011 and 576 for 2001 - an increase between 2001 and 2011 of 33%.

The *Community Action Plan* itself notes that “*at the time of the 2011 census the population of Strathard was 1382, an increase of 30 since the 2001 census.*”

We’re obviously missing a census from 2021 but, unless The Park knows better, I see no reason why the population for Strathard will not be likely to show an increase at least in line with the average 8 % increase in “accessible rural areas” recorded between 2011 and 2019 by the Scottish Government’s *Rural Scotland Key Facts* publication. It seems we may be well on our way to achieving this aim - a triumph for the *Pathway*.

Elsewhere in the *Framework* we get another completely unevidenced statement - “*there is an ageing and declining local population*” - urging us to build houses, for which no local housing needs analysis work appears to have taken place, in order to “*halt the population decline*”.

As someone who is broadly in support of the *Framework* process, as well as of much the content of the *Draft* itself, I’m concerned by this apparent lack of rigour - and by the possibility that, consciously or not, a case may be being constructed to fit at least one outcome (built development) which neither the evidence nor a majority of the local community necessarily support. That would be very troubling.

For all the individual merit of a good many of the envisaged steps along the “Pathway”, I’m also not sure there’s enough here to offer a clear enough guide in practise. It may well prove that when the going gets tough the *niceties* that the *Framework* unfortunately tends to make of matters of very real and pertinent substance, are too easily ditched in favour of the hard and fast, tried and failed, of more familiar ground.

2. Do you have any other suggestions for key milestones to include here or any milestones

I think the Park has made a fundamental mistake in setting its principal development aim as a crude population increase.

If the Park is still committed to the 4 aims set for it in the 2000 Act, then I'd like to see a percentage figure for community land ownership within Strathard set as a milestone. Oddly no mention is made anywhere in the document of an ownership change that has been fundamental elsewhere in bringing about the kind of transformations the *Framework* at least gives the appearance of seeking. Why?

Traffic flow figures could be measured at various key points in Strathard to get a picture of changing traffic movements. A useful milestone or two might be derived from that information. Up-to-date, publicly-available, figures for traffic-flow ought to be regarded as essential to a properly-informed planning process - that this has not been the case for the B829 for at least half of the 21st Century should be a matter of concern for all those who've been involved in relevant planning decisions.

3. What are your views on any risks or unintended consequences of this pathway?

I'd feel an awful lot happier with the things the Park gets up to if I saw stronger commitment in practise to its priority aim of conserving and enhancing natural and cultural heritage. As long as there are jet-skis on Loch Lomond and tweets advertising speedboat-towed raft rides on the Park website, the organisation - for all its good folk and fine work - lacks credibility.

I'm concerned that, like the draft *Framework* document itself, the *Pathway* betrays an overly narrow - material - understanding of "development" which skews the complex processes of shaping change and nurturing growth towards pre-defined, limited - largely economic - outcomes with no end of unintended, if not entirely unforeseeable, negative consequences.

There is precedent for this. There's evidence for example that the measures taken to tackle problems associated with group, car-based camping have played some part in the re-location of some of the original problems and the creation or exacerbation of different ones elsewhere. I only know one area - Kinlochard - well enough to be confident of my ground here but my experience of the "camping management plan" is of considerable increases in traffic driving to, and - worryingly - within the forest, increases in visitor numbers and associated development pressures and in littering and environmental damage. The precedents created and the "opportunities" for cashing in and further increasing demand/pressure - with applications for camp and camper-van sites - and the ad hoc creation of one at "Go Country" - as well as warping of the local housing market, only further remove control from those most negatively affected and from likely realisation of the kind of aims set out by the Park in strategies like the *Pathway*.

4. Please add any other comments about this section of the draft Framework

The petrol car sales ban by 2032 may prove a tad optimistic - as might 40% (electric) car ownership. Visitors "using improved bus connections from Stirling and Glasgow" takes optimism into the realm of fancy. There is a danger that without proper articulation, demonstrable rigour of approach and thorough first-stage planning that this ends up more uninformed, unevidenced, tweely-illustrated "wish-list" than "vision".

Given the opposition which many of the steps in the draft are likely to face long before they are put into place and tested, it'd be an idea to prepare the case early and avoid offering both hostages and ammunition - e.g. "Active travel routes get boost from signage" - now.

5. The proposed vision is: "Strathard is a tranquil landscape and climate-resilient place of outstanding natural beauty, with strong cultural heritage and cohesion. The area acts as a carbon sink while supporting biodiversity, recreation, and local communities' self-sufficiency. Outdoor access and eco-tourism work alongside a balanced visitor management approach and a diverse local economy to support the protection and promotion of this diverse and connected ecosystem and the well-being of local people and visitors. Nature-based solutions are used to manage flooding, improve and enhance infrastructure and facilities."

Do you agree with the wording of this vision? Please add any comments to explain your answer

It's more than a little clumsy (it reads like a sales leaflet) but succeeds in bringing together much of what I think people value - and wish to keep - about living here. The problem may be that in seeking to be inclusive it is very easily portrayed as unrealistic, and made unrealisable, by a small section of "stakeholder" interests (led by land and business owners) already holding disproportionate influence - as is demonstrated in the draft *Framework* document itself - in planning and development.

6. If you disagree, please add any suggestions for how you think it should be changed

I suggest cutting the word "promotion" - inappropriate and largely uncontrolled promotion (a good deal of it indulged in by the Park itself) is currently one of the major threats to the very things the Park is constituted to protect.

Something like:

"Outdoor activity and eco-tourism work alongside a balanced visitor management approach, a diverse local economy - and robust, informed and community-responsive authorities - to protect and enhance Strathard's natural and cultural assets. "

There are many Strathard residents who believe that a sustainable future for Strathard, of the kind just about envisaged here, would be best realised through community land ownership.

"The well-being of local people and visitors" - the Park has responsibilities to both, but these are not of the same order. A *national* Park certainly, but it's located here all-year round, just like the folk that live in it. A national stadium and parliament - but I don't think we expect the good folk of Mount Florida or Holyrood to have their well-being considered on a par with that of potential visitors from other constituencies. Wherever you live, your voice ought to be accorded some degree of precedence in discussions and decisions primarily affecting that place. Surely?

7. The area-wide strategy covers wider land-use change but also covers visitor management and issues relevant to all communities. The map shows the projects underway but also opportunities for where new tree planting, natural flood management, and peatland restoration could take place and recreational routes that could be improved/joined up/promoted – aqueduct trail and the Ben Lomond long-distance mountain bike route. Does the map capture all the strategic change needed in Strathard? Please add any comments to explain your answer

There's both need and opportunity to look at how community land acquisition might be the best mechanism to bring about not just the kind of changes outlined in the framework but a far-deeper, wider, longer-lasting and democratically-driven stewardship of Strathard resources and assets.

In the meantime it's heartening to see the emphasis given to native tree planting and protection, peat-land restoration, and flood management.

Might there be opportunities worth exploring for greater engagement with the commercial forest through off-grid/on-site "forester" management and/or wood-craft/produce housing. There are successful models for this kind of relationship with woodland.

Or small scale hutting, even?

8. Please provide any suggested changes to this map

I would be keen to ensure that identified "viewpoints" at no point preclude aesthetic considerations of other sites being taken into account in the planning process. I'd also like to see a plan for active community identification, evaluation and logging of "viewpoint" sites.

There's a few areas highlighted for native tree planting where I'm not sure of the process of identification, nor the suitability, of the site.

9. Do you agree with the priorities for the overall area?

It is important that the nature and cause of "visitor pressures" is properly understood and not simply attributed in its entirety (as it is here) to the "Covid pandemic". Pressures are multi-faceted in cause and in impact.

Without recognition of cultural and social change and the key role played by social media - and the Park itself - in uncritical (even reckless) promotion of certain areas and activities, these pressures are unlikely to be addressed and properly managed in the future.

I worry about throw-away statements such as "*opportunities... to promote community access and recreational use of woodlands.*"

We've seen what the Park's promotion of such opportunities (largely on behalf of private enterprise) has amounted to recently, who it's served, what damage it's done and who it's disadvantaged. Aside from all the traffic-issues/anti-social behaviour/environment damage/littering etc that over-promotion has contributed to, the Park has found itself "having to" introduce restrictions upon the very activity - and principle - that played such a part in the lives of those who campaigned for its creation (freedom to walk/cycle and camp).

Albeit in very demanding circumstances, I'd suggest that the Park has found itself unable to properly uphold the spirit and letter of the access provisions of the 2003 Land Reform Act. Uphold long-standing rights of community access where these are actively being denied - then perhaps there will be chance to talk about "*opportunities for promotion*".

Delighted to see native woodland - and the opportunities for business, community and skills development it offers - given priority. I hope these opportunities are not lost sight of when it comes to putting flesh on the bones.

"Tranquillity" is a significant asset. It's good to see the word and the concept given priority. It stands out - however it is unlikely to be safe-guarded by a policy which highlights

“opportunities to consolidate and enhance facilities at Loch Chon and Loch Ard to support low impact recreational activities such as camping, kayaking, paddle boarding, open water swimming, fishing and picnicking.” Fare ye weel tranquil watters. It’s like picking at a scab - leave it alone, let it heal.

The difficult “balance” the Park is charged with facilitating won’t be achieved without altering what’s on the scales - crude economic profit (even when masquerading as “jobs”) that is tied to out-dated economic models will have to take a hit if the Park is to successfully protect and conserve Strathard’s assets, nevermind sustain a measure of “tranquillity”. I fear that the Park - even in the few places it seems to recognise it’s in a fight - hasn’t the stomach for the battle.

Renewables - working with whom to identify and secure these? The last couple of decades has seen huge sums of public money pay for schemes operated for private profit and a scramble for “community dividend” pennies. This is not a good model to follow.

Farm and Estate *“Diversification opportunities could include agroforestry, local enterprise, renewable energy, camping/glamping sites and/or off grid recreational huts which could aim to support car-free based recreation and tourism stays that make the most of the tranquil environment and dark skies.”*

Is there much to suggest - or, more crucially, to ensure - that *“make the most of”* doesn’t amount to *exploit for private profit through the degradation, and eventual loss, of historical community assets?*

11. Please add any other comments about these priorities or any changes you may also wish to see.

It lacks depth of vision. The changes envisaged - and many more potential positive developments not included here - won’t be fully realised without development of the conditions needed for deeper individual & community engagement in stewardship of a common good that stretches beyond our own comings and goings. .

It’s not enough to equate “community resilience” with having a plan for when the road’s flooded. Resilience clearly goes far deeper: the Park can play a part in helping enable the development of existing pools of resilience into an active community resource.

12. The Framework has set out how views will be considered when a development proposal is being made – i.e. development in the foreground and middle ground of a view should not be overly intrusive, unsightly or prominent to the detriment of the view. Proposals in the background of the view should not harm the composition of the view in the context of landmarks – for example, Ben Lomond or Church spire in Aberfoyle. For land-use changes such as new woodland, where existing views will be unavoidably lost, other views should be identified and opened up. Do you agree with this approach?

Broadly, yes. But it will be interesting to see how it works in practise. I would hope that a comprehensive evaluation is undertaken of this approach (before it is applied) in order to give the detail and clarity which will be needed to pin down the aesthetic. I also hope engagement with local cultural and historical knowledge will be considered as a significant part of the aesthetic experience - and therefore of any evaluation of “the view”.

13. The views have been collated from OS maps, visitor leaflets, walking guides, local knowledge, and social media. Are there key views that need amended or removed or any key views that should be

Yes, quite possibly a great many. Whilst I absolutely welcome the overdue recognition given to the significance and value of “views” as a consideration in the planning process, I’m unsure about the process whereby these are identified, evaluated and given status. For all that it is a good thing, there is nevertheless a danger - if it is not a sufficiently critical process - that present forms of community engagement and consultation can result in “throw-away”, ill-conceived or unsupported suggestions being taken on board, put on paper and elevated to a position they do not merit, while others, less promoted or known are devalued (and perhaps eventually degraded) by omission. Popularity is important here but it can not be the only criterion.

The “scatter-gun” inclusion of some “viewpoints” and areas with significant “dark skies” value and omission of others with equal or greater claim is an inherently flawed - and undemocratic - approach. There needs to be both wider engagement and proper rigour if this is going to stand the tests development pressure will bring.

There are significant and valued “views” around Kinlochard that are not shown. I would hope that before conferring status upon certain “views” - as well as upon ideas and places - a properly critical public debate takes place.

It is also worth bearing in mind that many of our current visitor management problems stem from sites of interest/value being “discovered” and promoted widely (often, though not always, involving a profit motive) through social media and the Park itself. It’s no surprise that the last thing a good many folk will wish to do is share their knowledge of special places/flora & fauna etc with the Park - that does not mean that such places etc are not worthy of the Park’s protection. Think Ospreys.

14. Do you agree with the top 3 priorities for the Forest? Please add any comments to explain your answer

I would, given the specific potential impact on walkers as well as any wider impacts, urge proper consideration of which - if any - routes are to be specifically designated, or their use encouraged, for cycling. It’s worth remembering that cycling is something engaged in by a wide range of people, for differing purposes and in all sorts of ways/speeds/attitudes. “Gravelfoyle”, as well as being an embarrassing name to have associated with Strathard, seems to me to be an unnecessary over-promotion (for what purposes?) of one aspect of a shift already taking place. People boarding moving trains like this, either to cash-in or have themselves associated with success, would do well to be wary of the dangers.

I’m not sure how you envisage using “way-marking and signage to resolve any potential conflict between recreational users, e.g. mountain biking and walking.” Promoting some paths and tracks as “cycling routes” will only make it worse. In allowing itself to be used to promote the vested interests of one group of people who use bicycles it is quite possible that the Park will negatively impact the numbers and experience of other groups of cyclists as well as of walkers.

Signage - whilst understanding the need for people to feel (and be) safe in what can be a disorientating, closed-in (and changing) environment, I hope proper consideration will be given to the purpose and effects of any signage. Not all roads and tracks need sign-posting - probably only those to be singled out (if they must) as cycling routes and the “loops” from car-parks. In both cases it may well be that a few direction posts similar to the existing posts combined with colour co-ordinated way-markers might offer the best option.

There is an educational opportunity too to engage with folk using the forest - encouraging map-use and way-faring skills - perhaps combined with cultural and natural heritage information/interpretation boards (& leaflets etc) placed appropriately.

Over-reliance on "in journey" directions doesn't solve the problem, or make things safer or more enriching, long-term. It increases dependency, non-engagement and promotes over-use (and degradation) of certain routes.

15. Please suggest any changes you would make to these priorities

I do not understand how a National Park charged with protecting the natural and cultural heritage of the area - and aware of the pressures & demands currently made upon Strathard - can honestly envisage a "medium to larger scale tourism accommodation development around Duchray Castle... having no adverse impacts". If you're going to leave the door open... I think you should share.

One of the saddest things about what I see happening to Strathard (there are many) is the role the Park has played in promoting the agenda of business interests in narrow material development - when, having seen what has happened to the area around Kenmore where I grew up - I thought the Park might protect and nurture the subtler relationships of people and place. Aye, well.

16. Do you agree with the top 3 priorities for Aberfoyle? Please add any comments to explain your answer.

Aberfoyle as the "Hub" for Strathard is an important and welcome idea. I don't think this kind of arrangement could have been left to chance alone but needs encouragement. That also means ensuring that proper work is done to establish local housing need, as well the locally desired shape of any wider economic change.

If "affordable" housing is a local need, or there is demand for more people to move to the area to fill long-term employment shortages, then, unless there are exceptional reasons arising elsewhere (and exceptional support to meet additional demands upon infrastructure), Aberfoyle has to be the place this is sited. It is not enough to use the difficulties that might need to be overcome in finding suitable sites as an excuse for building more easily where there is no proven or less need, suitability or necessary infrastructure.

Looking at encouraging re-purposing housing currently used for holiday lets, second-homes or for tourist accommodation should be considered. As should Park promotion of changes to tax arrangements and other legislation that currently incentivises houses not being homes. If the Park is serious about its principal aim, I would be keen to see a campaign highlighting the serious social effects of 2nd and holiday home ownership locally.

It's great to see Strathard architectural vernacular and materials being noted - particularly in conjunction with the potential use of local Heritage information resources - "when considering development in the village". It's long overdue.

18. Do you agree with the top 3 priorities for Kinlochard? Please add any comments to explain your answer.

The Altskeith is no longer a hotel.

Why does it need a "wooded setting" for timber houses in Kinlochard? Kinlochard is in large part a forestry-village surrounded by trees. The whole village and area is "a wooded setting".

If we do find ourselves in a position where there is a local housing need, as well as seeking to re-purpose holiday homes etc, let's at least build homes imaginatively and well.

Metal is also very much a valued part of the vernacular as a roofing and cladding material.

It is questionable whether *"opportunities to enhance and consolidate provision for quiet recreational enjoyment of Loch Ard"* can be compatible with the continued promotion of Loch Ard as a suitable site for Stag & Hen parties and a bouncy-castle "waterpark". It will take careful planning and management to ensure that Loch Ard does not lose its tranquility and natural qualities (and habitat) to the development pressure of visitor numbers and demands. The first step might be to acknowledge the current path of travel under existing promotional and development activity; before re-positioning as a high-quality (not cost) peaceful, quiet, not "touristy", carefully developed & promoted experience of natural and cultural heritage.

Priority 3 (Infrastructure) is a greater priority, for residents and visitors and for meeting the Park's aims, than Priority 2 (Housing). It seems odd to put a thing for which there is no established need and seemingly very little support within the community before another (upon which the first is dependent) for which there is demonstrable need and a veritable clamour. Who decided "housing" is a "priority" at all? On what basis? Does this tell us anything?

"...but where sites (in Aberfoyle) cannot be found and are ruled out for consideration due to constraints, then consideration will be given to Kinlochard to help meet the housing needs for people living and working within Kinlochard and the wider Strathard area."

As part of a sustainable transport and environment strategy the Park seeks to establish Aberfoyle as the "Hub" for Strathard where development, employment and "area" infrastructure are centred, posits - albeit without evidence - a local housing need as well as economic development sites... and then suggests that if that doesn't work then... bugger it... stick some houses up the (congested and dangerous) road.

"Cannot be found" and *"ruled out due to constraints"* - surely only one "get-out" clause is required.

Surely the Park wishes to support and enable the communities it serves to determine a future that meets their needs and wishes? Surely it recognises the cultural and natural diversity of its local communities as an asset? Why not help Kinlochard assess its own development and housing needs properly and to meet these with consideration and imagination - rather than have a democratically-accountable organisation even countenance forcing unwanted, unsupported change upon a community to meet what is acknowledged to be another set of housing needs and targets?

"There is an ageing and declining local population and a lack of affordable housing. Opportunities to provide more affordable housing are hampered due to flooding and/or other constraints within Aberfoyle." (page 9)

Even leaving aside the dubiety of the *"declining local population"* claim, what proper evidence is there of a "lack of affordable housing"? And if there is any, why not reference it? What local housing needs analysis has taken place? I would think that there is probably considerable local support for "more affordable housing" but it'd be worth knowing what this is before planning it - does the Park even know whether they are proposing more affordable housing or more affordable housing? What does it look like: more densely arranged mini-schemes for the small-mass masses? Or something that actually challenges developers/housing associations and other providers to devise creative and sensitive

responses both to the actual nature of local housing need (even “desire” God forbid) and to environment and situation. What “other constraints”? If there is an Aberfoyle housing need (not simply ill-thought-out re-location from other areas) then Aberfoyle (infrastructure etc) is the place to develop it. Who’d have thought it? *place* is important here, in housing matters.

Other areas - if there is an established and identified need - could work to develop individual and housing clusters appropriate to their needs, hopes and circumstances.

20. Do you agree with the top 3 priorities for Stronachlachar and Inversnaid? Please add any comments to explain your answer.

“Implement a scheme to facilitate positive use of access rights where it may currently be misunderstood by visitors to the area.”

I would hope that any such scheme would address the full range of misunderstandings of the Access Code and access issues held by land-owners and residents, as well as visitors.

It is more than unfortunate that failings in outdoor and civic education, along with irresponsible marketing and poor management of visitor pressures - and some very difficult issues with criminal and anti-social behaviour - have led to the vilification of particular groups of visitors and to attempts to restrict and undermine the rights we all enjoy under the Access Code.

22. Do you agree we have the correct timescales and proposed lead organizations?

“Affordable housing” is given - with no explanation, justification, evidence, analysis work or consultation - as “Priority 2” (the number indicating an order of priority) for Kinlochard in an Indicative Delivery Plan which will presumably go to the National Park Board. One would almost think - in the context of a document highlighting its emergence from community engagement and consultation - that the community of Kinlochard had indicated in some way that “affordable housing” was the second most important of its priorities.

This is not the case.

In fact the community of Kinlochard has already expressed a considerable degree of opposition to the idea of a perceived need for housing *elsewhere* being met through building in Kinlochard. The disingenuity shown in this document is made all the more galling by the facts that there is not currently suitable infrastructure to support housing development, and that no local housing needs analysis or consultation has been carried out.

For information to be presented to its Board by a democratically-accountable organisation in this way is not only disingenuous - it’s actually, when you think about it, fairly outrageous. It doesn’t feel right, nevermind democratic.

I note that “investigate development sites” (for housing) is scheduled without any housing needs analysis work or consultation having taking place. Recent experience in Kinlochard means this is not as surprising as it should be - but it’s no less ridiculous or alarming. The nearest thing to the comprehensive work needed is “an audit of vacant sites, buildings, housing stock, tourism accommodation to understand need and demand for both housing and tourism.” which will take place *after* investigation of sites. Developers must love working with the Park.

The plan outlined here for “signage” suggests that rather than any safety aspect or educational opportunity, “signage” is actually about little more than augmenting “a walking

and cycling *marketing plan*" - something which of course will just attract more people to already over-promoted areas without an effective visitor management strategy in place.

Perhaps the Park itself could benefit from some clear idea of where it's going and how it might get there.

"TBC - Kinlochard local group could be expanded to Strath wide group with public agency involvement"

"Establish new group and investigate funding options. Aspects of project could include raising profile with the community, working with businesses, investigating Dark Sky Sanctuary status or Discovery Sites, updating sky quality/darkness survey, lighting management plan and light replacement."

Publishing - without, as far as I am aware, any consultation with those involved - plans for hijacking an evolving local community group with "public agencies" and business involvement to meet an organisation's own "targets" is an almost perfect demonstration of how not to do community engagement.

23. Please let us know which projects (maximum 2) you think should definitely happen in the next two years.

I honestly believe the Park has to think again about how it sees and engages with the communities it serves.

I worry about where Strathard is headed. I'm not sure that the Park - despite its stated aims, and for all the good folk involved with it and the good work they do - can actually protect this area's natural and cultural heritage. I wonder if the balancing act of being Conservation Agency *and* Planning Authority has proved too much.

24. Please provide any other comments on the content of the draft Framework

It is always useful to find out what is needed and what people want before doing it. The *Framework*, for all that is good about its bringing together of the things people living in Strathard value, leaves the way clear for many of these things to be degraded and perhaps eventually lost.

The ground appears to be being prepared for significant development in tourism and housing provision without thorough public discussion having taken place. .

" Whilst decisions rest with individual owners and managers, the framework provides a steer as to what the wider stakeholders in Strathard would most like to see in relation to land use choices and conservation projects in the area. " Page7

Decisions don't rest with individual owners and managers at all - they rest with what should be the democratically responsive and accountable powers of the planning authority and (ultimately) Scottish Gov. These bodies are responsible to all " the wider stakeholders in Strathard" and beyond. The *Framework* - if it truly has been developed through meaningful engagement with the people who live here (*the* key stakeholders) - surely should provide something more than "a steer" to " what the wider stakeholders (*I take it that's us again, who else is there afterall?*) would most like to see".

"Use of the Strathard Framework as Planning Guidance Development proposals within the Strathard Community Council area will be guided and determined by using the following

planning policy approach: (a) Development proposals will be supported where they accord with the policies in the Local Development Plan, or (b) That will help fulfil the area based strategy established in this Framework (Section 6) or the detailed sub-area strategies (Section 8) (c) Where a proposal represents a departure from (a) or (b) above, support may be given, where the proposal demonstrates: (i) That there are positive land management, visitor management or biodiversity enhancement gains that will be delivered as identified in the strategy; and (ii) That any open market or commercial elements of the proposal help cross subsidise the delivery of the gains.” (page 8)

In other words *it's been nice... but...* any proposal that is deemed to provide sufficient “positive visitor management gains” - Lord protect us from suchlike, seeing no one else will - or is accompanied by enough sweeteners to buy some - may still command support. Is this still called a “Trump card”.

Response 17 – Forest and Land Scotland (Central Region)

Pathway to Change (P6)

1. On the “Development” path, there is one mention of housing between 2025 and 2030, however there is no mention of seasonal accommodation that the tourism sector is (largely) dependent on. There is an assumption that larger tourism providers will be able to provide such accommodation to their staff, however smaller operators may find this a barrier to creating businesses in the area. Decarbonising is an ambitious target – it might be useful to define what this objective will specifically look like, and what the “success criteria” might be.

On the “Land Use” path -

- there is a target of 20,000 ha per year of native woodland expansion, which I suspect is a typo (as the Strathard area is only 10,000 ha)
- another target is “waterbodies achieve good ecological status” – the underlying geology is acidic in nature which will be a contributing factor to the current poor category, so achieving “good” status may not be possible to achieve
- new tree planting along the Loch Katrine road is currently being planned, and should be delivered around 2030
- reference to “climate resilient planting programme” would benefit from a clearer description so stakeholders understand what this means

There is mention of forest diversification, but this aim might be better delivered by referring to an “ecosystem-led” approach (which is mentioned elsewhere in the framework).

2. There is mention of projects continuing or gaining funding (rhododendron and NFM) but no milestone describing progress or completion. Whilst difficult to define, it would be good to have a strategic date in mind for both of these projects to complete.

3. One of the main risks is funding – many of the activities FLS currently undertake are described in the “Land Use” path, and are dependent on these activities continuing to be funded. In my view, delivery of the various changes could attract a significant number of people to Strathard for a number of reasons, which is at odds with the statement in the “Kinlochard” sub area of the Strategic Summary on page 12.

4. Nothing further.

Vision (P11)

5/6. I think there should be some reference to the role productive forest management has in the area, acknowledging the role timber plays in sustaining the Scottish wood processing industry. Residents and visitors to the area will see evidence of this (felling sites, timber haulage) so should be aware of the activity.

Area wide strategy – map (P15)

7. FLS are continuing to restructure the largely non-native conifer forests in the area, started in the early 1990s, which are already delivering a number of the benefits contained within the framework. However, there is still much to be done, and might be worth highlighting on the map.

Area wide strategy (P16 – 17)

9. Generally supportive.

10/11

Priority 1 – whilst the objective of active travel and reduced reliance on private cars is supported, this will take many years to implement. There is evidence that existing parking provision is inadequate, and as more visitors come to Strathard the situation is likely to get worse before it gets better. There needs to be a short term solution found to this issue, otherwise the wider objectives of the framework will be more difficult to implement and communities will become increasingly frustrated.

Priority 2 – agreed, but (having been involved) very complex to understand the hydrology.

Priority 5 – FLS already have arrangements in place to allow access and egress for the emergency services during emergency flood events. I suspect what is meant here is use of the forest road for domestic purposes during flooding events. FLS will continue to participate in discussions with stakeholders and partners.

Priority 6 – as mentioned previously, not sure if “good” status is achievable given geology of the area.

Landscape qualities and important views (P18)

12. Agree with the statement in terms of development, but each application needs to be considered individually (as I know it does already). Land management changes can be transitional (e.g. an area of trees being felled which opens up a view which is subsequently lost when the replanted trees grow) so need to be viewed in that context. Also, retention of views can place a significant financial burden on a landowner (both cutting regenerating trees and the loss of productive ground). Forest plans currently include views (agreed with stakeholders) showing the potential impact of land management, but not from all of the viewpoints shown on the map.

13. Key views (in the forest plan context) are currently agreed at the time of plan preparation with stakeholders – this seems to work well and should be continued.

The Forest (P20 – 23)

14. It's a bit strange that none of the priorities for “the forest” actually involve the forest as such. The priorities listed are understood, and are warranted. However, the statement that “limited opportunities for tourism development given it is commercial forestry” isn't justified given that there are examples locally (Strathyre cabins) where such development is accommodated without significant problems.

15. There should be a priority reflecting statements made earlier in the framework around tree species diversity, more native species, and making the forest more resilient to climate change. There should also be a priority about getting local communities more involved in land management decision making – this was successfully achieved as one of the outcomes from the Strathard Initiative, where six members of the Kinlochard community worked with FLS planners to prepare the Beinn Bhan land management plan.

Aberfoyle (p24 – 27)

16/17. I would suggest that one of the most attractive qualities of Aberfoyle is the forest surrounding the village (which is mostly non-native) and so this should be recognised as a priority, possibly along the lines of enhancing the links from the village to the forest.

Kinlochard (P28 – 31)

18. Agree.

19. I expected to see flooding of the B829 appearing as a priority, particularly the section adjacent to Loch Ard.

Stronachlachar and Inversnaid (P32 – 35)

20. Agree – new native woodland currently being considered as part of the Katrine land management plan.

Delivery Plan

22. Visitor management pressure project should include FLS, as should Aqueduct path, Active travel route between Kinlochard and Aberfoyle, Peatland restoration. FLS correctly identified to lead on implementation natural flood management.

23.

From a land management point of view, deer management is a key issue having a significant impact on both planted trees (especially native species) and fragile habitats (especially in designated sites) as well as degrading upland vegetation through grazing.

The natural flood management project is at a stage where –

- the trial catchment at Allt Glas is ready for a range of techniques to be installed which are designed to reduce flood peaks
- further analysis / assessment of the catchment is required before NFM can be deployed over a much larger area

24. No further comments – the framework is a valuable contribution to looking at Strathard in a strategic way, highlighting interdependencies and succinctly describing the issues that need to be addressed with, most importantly, solutions suggested.

Response 18 – Kinlochard Village Hall

Appendix 1

Indicative Delivery Plan

It seems odd that one of the longest standing community organisations in Strathard is not included in the list of “various other sub-groups operating in the area” when table 1 shows “Visitor Management Pressures in Kinlochard” as an indicative project being tackled by the established steering group. KVH has been involved in visitor management with LLTNP for many years and it is the ground that forms part of their managed assets that most visitors converge on.

5 Strategy Summary page 12 – Kinlochard

We support “Protect the tranquil qualities of Kinlochard and shores of Loch Ard,”

But need clarification of meaning “with support for more community facilities and greater infrastructure to support visitors”

We do not see that further facilities round the current community facilities would be welcome in supporting visitors.

6 Key Land Use Page 14 (This also applies to Page 17 Priority 5 Community Resilience)

We agree that there is a need to build in more community resilience to flooding. We are unsure if the erstwhile emergency access to KVH is available to facilitate events in the hall during emergency closure of the B829 – eg community events, weddings etc

Priorities for overall area Page 16

Priority 4

We would like to make it clear that we do not see any opportunities to consolidate and enhance facilities at Loch Ard to support low impact recreational activities such as camping, kayaking, paddle boarding, swimming, fishing and picnicking at the West end of Loch Ard. In fine weather, the area round KVH is totally overwhelmed with unsustainable numbers as it. The loch itself is certainly big enough to sustain more activity but not any more originating from the KVH and West end of the Loch.

Page 29, bottom– Just a wee point the website is actually KVH website

Top3 Priorities for Kinlochard – Page 31

Priority one – Visitor Management

We strongly disagree that there is any “opportunity to enhance and consolidate provisionand tranquillity of the area” anywhere on the West of the Loch where KVH and the Community field are.

Overall LLTNP – Other inputs to Starthard Framework

Active Park, Healthy People: Outdoor Recreation Delivery Plan: KVH (SCIO) responded to this consultation and have not yet had a satisfactory response. Although LLTNP did meet with KVH and SCC reps to discuss concerns, there was no real discussion of the very valid points raised. Covid (2020), we were informed had meant it was all on the back burner and subject to total review considering the problems throughout the park with visitors overwhelming many areas, without any further encouragement through Active Park. We have now been told that the plan has been resubmitted to the board, yet there has been no consultation on this reviewed document. That document buried Loch Ard – quite literally, and KVH would like to stress that it will not be able to function and serve the community as its charitable purpose states, if more people are encouraged by LLTNP to come to the area where our Community assets are.

We would like to thank LLTNP and particularly the staff most involved for enabling this Framework Document and encouraging engagement from Community bodies and Community Asset Managers such as KVH (SCIO).

Response 19 - RSPB

Pathway to Change (P6)

1. Do you think we have captured the main changes on the pathway diagram (Page 6) that need to happen to decarbonise the area and increase the population so it is sustainable and thriving?

As a broad overview of the main land use changes required for Strathard to meet Net Zero by 2045, in line with the Scottish Government's commitment to achieve the same, the timeline on p6 appears to have captured the key steps. Key milestones such as protected woodland sites gaining favourable status before 2030 will clearly be dependent on successful and swift collaborative action on herbivore management in the next couple of years. 2021-2025 will be a critical time for the delivery of the Framework as many of the actions will require successful funding applications. Collaborative action will ensure a stronger likelihood of meeting the 2045 target.

The figure of 20,000 hectares of native woodland expansion per year requires clarification as this is higher than Scotland's national woodland creation target (18,000 hectares by 2025).

2. Do you have any other suggestions for key milestones to include here or any milestones

No.

3. What are your views on any risks or unintended consequences of this pathway?

As referred to above, the success of this pathway will be dependent on a number of the key land use priorities quickly progressing soon after the adoption of this Framework. RSPB Scotland look forward to working with partners on these.

4. Please add any other comments about this section of the draft Framework

We are pleased to see action on invasive species, herbivore overgrazing and peatland restoration as issues requiring urgent attention in Strathard. Healthy woodlands and peatlands are central to not only addressing the dual climate and biodiversity crises but also to our health and wellbeing and the local economy.

Vision (P11)

5. The proposed vision is: "Strathard is a tranquil landscape and climate resilient place of outstanding natural beauty, with strong cultural heritage and cohesion. The area acts as a carbon sink while supporting biodiversity, recreation and local communities' self-sufficiency. Outdoor access and eco-tourism work alongside a balanced visitor management approach and a diverse local economy to support the protection and promotion of this diverse and connected eco-system and the well-being of local people and visitors. Nature based solutions are used to manage flooding, improve and enhance infrastructure and facilities."

Do you agree with the wording of this vision? Please add any comments to explain your answer

Yes, we agree with the wording of this vision.

6. If you disagree, please add any suggestions for how you think it should be changed

Area wide strategy - map (P15)

7. The area wide strategy covers wider land use change but also covers visitor management and issues relevant to all communities. The map shows the projects underway but also opportunities for where new tree planting, natural flood management and peatland restoration could take place and recreational routes that could be improved/joined up/promoted – aqueduct trail and the Ben Lomond long distance mountain bike route. Does the map capture all the strategic change needed in Strathard? Please add any comments to explain your answer

Yes, we feel that the Map captures the strategic change required in Strathard. The map highlights the importance of the Natural Capital potential in the north-west of Strathard which takes in RSPB Inversnaid, where we manage over 800 ha of Scottish Rainforest, mixed native woodland, montane scrub and peatland. RSPB Inversnaid is part of The Great Trossachs Forest (TGTF) and we welcome the proposal on the map for new woodland creation opportunities on land adjacent to TGTF, such as Comer. Enhancing ecological connectivity between TGTF and the Loch Lomond Woods SAC will increase habitat availability for a range of important flora and fauna in Strathard and will play a significant role in Net Zero ambitions. Any increase in woodland creation however has to be matched by effective herbivore management across the area.

Along with new planting in Strathard, natural tree regeneration will also play a critical role in expansion of and connectivity between existing native woodlands. All woodlands in Strathard - new, existing and productive - must be developed and managed in a way that provides biodiversity value and we welcome the opportunity through this Framework to work with partners on achieving this.

8. Please provide any suggested changes to this map

Area wide strategy (P16-17)

9. Do you agree with the priorities for the overall area?

Yes, the nine priorities provide a comprehensive overview of the key focus areas for the lifespan of the Framework. We are pleased to see the dual emphasis on existing and new woodland creation in *Priority Three* as Strathard holds internationally important native woodland currently in unfavourable condition. We rightly need to establish new native woodland and allow for natural regeneration in the area but improving the management of existing native woodland has to be a top priority and we are pleased to see this reflected here.

Including explicit biodiversity priorities that are broken down by type; woodland, peatland, flood management will be important to attracting funding to develop projects within Strathard. We look forward to working collaboratively with partners, including the community to ensure that these priorities are delivered in a measurable way.

It is noted in Priority Nine: *Farm and Estate Diversification* that RSPB are listed as a landowner for whom there is the potential for an enabling role for development to help finance significant natural capital enhancements and visitor infrastructure. We would welcome further discussions with LLTNPA on this.

If you disagree, please tell us why.

10. Please add any other comments about these priorities or any changes you may also wish to see.

Priority Seven: Peatland Restoration is light on detail compared to other Priorities. Although this topic has been discussed elsewhere in the Framework, it could be expanded here so that the holistic benefits to people and nature are made clear. The opportunities to promote skill development and to support the local economy could also be made here as they have been in *Priority Three*. The use of local contractors will be critical to a successful expansion of peatland restoration and help to demonstrate the societal benefits of this action.

RSPB Scotland has extensive experience of wetland creation on our reserve network, including at RSPB Loch Lomond and alongside partners on other land. We are therefore encouraged to see reference to the creation of wetland areas in the wider Strath as part of Priority Three: *Natural Flood Management* and would welcome the opportunity to be consulted on these projects.

Landscape qualities and important views (P18)

11. The Framework has set out how views will be considered when a development proposal is being made – i.e. development in the foreground and middle ground of a view should not be overly intrusive, unsightly or prominent to the detriment of the view. Proposals in the background of the view should not harm the composition of the view in the context of landmarks – for example Ben Lomond or Church spire in Aberfoyle. For land use changes such as new woodland, where existing views will be unavoidably lost, other views should be

identified and opened up. Do you agree with this approach? Please add any comments to explain your answer.

We support views being opened up where possible and appropriate to the landscape but this will need to be considered on a case-by-case basis against other factors such as biodiversity importance.

12. The views have been collated from OS maps, visitor leaflets, walking guides, local knowledge and social media. Are there key views that need amended or removed or any key views that should be added?

The Forest (P20-23)

13. Do you agree with the top 3 priorities for the Forest? Please add any comments to explain your answer

14. Please suggest any changes you would make to these priorities

Whilst it is recognised that each of the three FLS Land Management Plans covering The Forest will go into greater detail the specific management of the area's existing woodland, we recommend that woodland management and creation is included as one The Forest's Land Use Priorities. This is the most wooded of the Strathard sub-areas and on issues such as reducing the impact of herbivores and enhancing the quality of existing woodlands, it will be particularly important for the Framework to showcase to the value of joined up, collaborative landscape-scale action.

Aberfoyle (P24-27)

15. Do you agree with the top 3 priorities for Aberfoyle? Please add any comments to explain your answer.

16. Please suggest any changes you would make to these priorities

Kinlochard (P28-31)

17. Do you agree with the top 3 priorities for Kinlochard? Please add any comments to explain your answer.

18. Please suggest any changes you would make to these priorities.

Stronachlachar and Inversnaid (P32-35)

19. Do you agree with the top 3 priorities for Stronachlachar and Inversnaid? Please add any comments to explain your answer.

We welcome the inclusion of the RSPB Inversnaid visitor centre as a potential site for exploring further development and would welcome the opportunity to discuss this further.

20. Please suggest any changes you would make to these priorities

The wording of the text under '*Land Use Priorities*' would benefit from being altered to make the need for herbivore management explicit in relation to *preserving the existing woodland in the area /allow natural regeneration*. Pressures from invasive non-native species such as rhododendron *and* over-grazing by large herbivores are *the* primary factors for the current unfavorable condition status of the internationally important Loch Lomond Woods Special Area of Conservation, a site and ecosystem that is a key characteristic of the Stronachlachar and Inversnaid sub-area.

It is noticeable that there is no mention of the natural environment of Stronachlachar and Inversnaid in '*Key Characteristics*' on p.33. As mentioned above, the area holds native woodland of international importance, The Great Trossachs Forest National Nature Reserve and RSPB Inversnaid.

Biodiversity, including many rare and declining species, is an integral part of the rich cultural heritage of the area. Over the lifespan of the Framework, the actions in areas like Stronachlachar and Inversnaid have the potential to provide multiple benefits from promoting the area for visitors to enhancing the health and wellbeing of the people who live and work in the area, all whilst tackling the joint climate and biodiversity crises head on. We would like to see more explicit references to this throughout the Framework.

Delivery plan

21. Do you agree we have the correct timescales and proposed lead organisations?

Most, if not all of the Natural Capital and Flood Management projects will require collaboration between delivery partners working in the area so ahead of these projects

initiating we don't have any specific comments to make on the named potential lead partners at this stage.

22. Please let us know which projects (maximum 2) you think should definitely happen in the next two years.

Given that the Pathway to Change on p6 of the Draft Framework identifies an ambition to ensure *protected woodland sites gain favourable status due to reduced herbivore grazing before 2030*, herbivore management will be *the* key project in the area to commence in the first two years of this Framework.

Any final comments

23. Please provide any other comments on the content of the draft Framework

RSPB Scotland support the proposed direction of the draft Framework and look forward to working alongside the National Park, community and other stakeholders to collaboratively work towards making the projects detailed within it a reality to meet the ambitious targets. The Framework has the potential to act as a vehicle to facilitate positive change in the area. Most of the priorities in the draft Framework are inter-linked and with the main intention of the Framework to integrate land use management and development planning it will be important to ensure that the Delivery Plan reflects this

We do feel however that this integrated approach does become less obvious as the Framework progresses beyond the area-wide priorities. Each of the top 3 priorities for the sub-areas are generally infrastructure and/or development focused, with the land use priorities separate. We would recommend that the land use priorities for each sub-area are made more prominent on their respective pages. For Strathard to meet Net-Zero by 2045, the nature-based solutions included in this Framework will be of critical importance and this message must be evident. In its current form, it feels as though the references to land use priorities become fewer as the Framework progresses and compared to other priorities, contain less detailed information. The final Framework must ensure that these solutions are placed front and centre alongside the other priorities.

Land Manager questions

1. Are you supportive of the conservation projects listed in the Framework? If not, then explain why. *e.g. new native woodland, wetland creation and river re-meandering, removal of invasive species, herbivore management, peatland restoration etc.*

Yes, we are supportive of the conservation projects, although we acknowledge that most of them in the delivery plan are an early stage and/or dependent on future funding.

2. Are you able to and would you consider supporting delivery of these projects?

As a land manager in Strathard, responsible for the management of internationally important woodland at RSPB Inversnaid, we are committed to seeking practical solutions to improve site condition. The future success of this Framework will be dependent on collaborative action across both Strathard and the National Park. To improve and to enhance the area's rich biodiversity, genuine partnership working is required on a landscape-scale. We would support delivery of the proposed conservation projects and look forward to this Framework becoming a mechanism to unlock needed funding for projects.

3. Are there any barriers to taking forward the conservation projects identified in the Framework? If so, what type of barriers? *e.g. knowledge of resources available (i.e. information/funding), lack of time/staff/expertise, doesn't fit with current business model etc.*

Ensuring adequate funding is in place to deliver the suite of indicative projects will be crucial to meet the bold Vision of this Framework.

4. Do you think the Framework could help you make a funding application for any of the priorities?

If the final Framework acts as a vehicle for partners to add value to future funding applications then we would be supportive of this.

5. Are there other diversification opportunities that you think would be beneficial to the area (not already listed on page 17)?

6. Do you have any other comments regarding the Framework and its delivery plan?

In their current forms, we don't feel that the draft framework and delivery plans are aligned. For example, on p6 of the delivery plan, all of the conservation projects come under 'Natural Capital and Flood Management'. This title does not match with the area-wide priorities on pp16-17 in the Framework. The delivery plan will be the key document in translating the Framework into action across the area and therefore the links between the two documents need to be clearer and be consistent in use of language. We recognise that the delivery plan is indicative at this stage but we would expect to see each of the projects to have more detailed information as they progress to include milestones and clear and measurable objectives.

We note that the Strathard Framework and specifically *trailing natural capital valuation and production of a programme of nature-restoration projects* is referenced in the recent *National Park Future Nature Route Map* and we look forward to working with the Park and partners on both that Route Map and this Framework to explore opportunities.

Response 20 – Marine Scotland

Thank you for the opportunity to provide a consultation response on the Loch Lomond and the Trossachs National Park Strathard Framework Planning Guidance. On this occasion we have no comment.

Response 21 – Scottish Water

Thank you for getting in touch regarding the draft Srathard Framework. Thank you for including Scottish Water in the workshops to create this Framework- we would be happy to contribute to any other similar work to pull together other frameworks across the national park.

I had nothing to add from Scottish Water's point of view on the questions you were asking in your consultation so I did not complete the form. However, it's always a good opportunity for us just to emphasise that we are happy to discuss any development sites and attend any meetings where you find it useful to have a Scottish Water delegate attend.

It would be good to remind developers and social housing associations that they should get in touch with Scottish Water as soon as possible with any development plans. This is particularly relevant with the national park, due to the known network constraints and network capacity etc. Early discussions here can avoid later issues.

Response 22 - SEPA

Thank you for consulting SEPA on the Strathard Framework Planning Guidance. From a planning perspective, we are supportive of draft guidance. We welcome the integrated approach to land use change promoted by the framework and the priorities identified therein particularly around flood risk, water quality and peat restoration.

We understand this will inform land use decisions and future funding priorities and will be considered as planning guidance to accompany the Local Development Plan (as clarified on p. 8). We note it doesn't allocate sites itself but does identify development priorities and opportunities such as for affordable housing, infrastructure, tourism accommodation and renewable energy. We are content to engage on these proposals as required through the planning process or the next LDP. We will also continue to engage with Stirling Council on the development of the Aberfoyle Flood Alleviation Scheme.

We look forward to continuing to work with you on this and are happy to provide advice on issues as they arise.

Response 23 – Stirling Council Housing

Pathway to Change (Pg 6)

- There is a comment here about affordable housing being built to “Future Homes Standard.” I think this only applies in England.
- What form would the “housing needs assessment” take and who would undertake this?

Other than that, pleased to see that housing development is supported by the framework.

Response 24 – Transport Scotland

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on the draft Strathard Framework. Transport Scotland notes the focus on active and sustainable travel, promoting a shift towards sustainable modes; and the transition to a net zero carbon society which is welcomed. We continue to be a stakeholder in the Park's Visitor Management Strategy and understand the Council applied for funding for scheduled bus routes for tourists which would reduce the number of car trips in the Park.

Response 25 – Strathard Community Council

Executive Summary

Strathard Community Council's (SCC) response to the Draft Strathard Framework has been compiled in consultation with the Community Chartering Network (CCN), the facilitators of the Community Life Plans for SCC. The vision and aspirations for what is needed for local communities to flourish embodied in Community Life Plans carry the wisdom and weight of a significant majority of the electorate of Strathard. SCC recognises the responsibility and duty to represent this faithfully and accurately in this response.

All involved in preparing this response were impressed and pleased to see how closely the Strathard Framework's Vision aligns with those in the Community Life Plans. Our response is intended to strengthen and improve the Framework by giving greater emphasis to themes contained within the Vision and deemed critical to sustainable development by Strathard residents, and by proposing locally-specific details essential to the accurate alignment of the Framework and residents' aspirations.

The response proceeds through the Strathard Framework in page order and draws attention to points of divergence between the Framework and the Community Life Plans. These are broadly divided into 3 categories; (page numbers refer to those in the Draft Strathard Framework and referenced in this response.)

1. The omission of economic diversification from the Strategies and Priorities articulated in the Framework. While self-sufficiency and sustainability are expressed in the Framework's Vision, the need for economic diversification articulated in all Community Life Plans has been omitted under the Strategies and Priorities for Strathard and each community. These have been outlined in our response to the Vision (P11), Strategy Summary (P12) and under the Strategies and Priorities for Strathard and each community. Our proposals identify residents' aspirations for community ownership, enterprise, energy and housing as an essential component to supporting greater self-sufficiency and sustainability through the diversification of local economies away from an over-dependence on tourism.

We also suggest the inclusion of an Appendix summarising the core Principles and Themes of the Life Plans, as these support the interpretation of the Framework's Vision by grounding it in the specific realities and aspirations of each location and community (P11).

2. The requirement for a more nuanced approach to addressing the shortage of affordable housing. A range of contributory factors underpinning the lack of affordable housing identified by residents are listed under Context (P9). We propose these intersecting factors are appraised when considering the development of further housing in the region.
3. Specific points of omission or clarification concerning the Use of the Strathard Framework as Planning Guidance (P8); the numbering of Priorities identified in the Framework (P16 and under each community); Landscape Qualities and Important Views (P18); and comments on the Indicative Delivery Plan (Appendix 1). Also

included are specific points relevant to each community, in Aberfoyle (P27); Kinlochard (P29 and P31); and in Stronachlachar and Inversnaid (P34 and P35).

We note that the Framework's Introduction sets out aspired key milestones until 2040, a period which is double that which provided the focus for the Community Life Plans. These 20-years will entail targets, changes and novel challenges unprecedented in the history of the nation, ones which will necessitate effective and efficient collaboration between communities and Government.

It is with this in mind that we make small suggestions towards a Framework which everyone can agree on, and which can provide a basis for a 'one team' approach in the uncertain times ahead.

SCC Response to the Strathard Framework

P8. Use of the Strathard Framework as Planning Guidance

(c) Where a proposal represents a departure from (a) or (b) above, support may be given, where the proposal demonstrates:

- (i) That there are positive land management, visitor management or biodiversity enhancement gains that will be delivered as identified in the strategy; and*
- (ii) That any open market or commercial elements of the proposal help cross subsidise the delivery of the gains.*

We have difficulty understanding (ii) and ask if it could be explained or articulated more clearly and completely? What do 'open market or commercial elements of the proposal' and 'help cross subsidise the delivery of the gains' mean? We think this is important, given that this is a condition which would allow for support to be given to proposals which conflict with the Framework. If it is ambiguous, residents may view this as an 'escape' clause.

P9. Context

"There is an ageing and declining local population (and) a lack of affordable housing. Opportunities to provide more affordable housing are hampered due to flooding and/or other constraints within Aberfoyle."

May we suggest this be split into two bullet points? Otherwise, there is the implication of a link between the 'ageing and declining local population and a lack of affordable housing'.

As is clear from the Community Life Plans, the issues of a declining population and affordable housing are complex, where contributory factors highlighted include:

- the impacts of too great an economic focus on Tourism, e.g. AirBnB; low skill, low wage and unstable employment), which puts pressure on housing stock and causes young people to seek careers elsewhere;
- second homes overinflating property values and pricing locals out of the market;
- housing deemed "affordable" may not be "affordable" for those who need it
- the prioritising of local authority-wide housing needs over local needs when social housing becomes available in Strathard;
- the argument by developers that they will not build in remote rural areas unless affordable housing stipulations are waived, as these mean they cannot fulfil their

requisite profit margins. The Stronachlachar Storehouse being a case in point here, which entailed a community where affordable housing was deemed in their Life Plan as being critical to social and economic sustainability;

- the lack of public transport and other services in more remote communities, which runs the risk of “social dumping”, the disintegrative impacts of which were expressed as a significant concern in the Kinlochard and Stronachlachar / Inversnaid Community Life Plans.

There are concerns that planning decisions can be harmful if they are informed by an oversimplified conception of the need or context for development, the Stronachlachar Storehouse being a good example. In short, the idea that the ageing and declining population can be resolved purely by building affordable housing wherever the opportunity arises, whilst waiving the policy wherever it takes a bite out of developer profits, without considering the deeper systemic dynamics articulated in the Community Life Plans, will result in unintended negative consequences. It is on this basis that we suggest the two ‘facts’ are decoupled.

P11. Vision

“Strathard is a tranquil landscape and climate resilient place of outstanding natural beauty, with strong cultural heritage and cohesion. The area acts as a carbon sink while supporting biodiversity, recreation and local communities’ self-sufficiency. Outdoor access and eco-tourism work alongside a balanced visitor management approach and a diverse local economy to support the protection and promotion of this diverse and connected ecosystem and the wellbeing of local people and visitors. Nature based solutions are used to manage flooding, improve and enhance infrastructure and facilities.”

The Vision seems in very good alignment with the vision and aspirations of the Community Life Plans.

However, we underline several ideas which were central to all Community Life Plans, but which do not follow through strongly and clearly to the area and community-specific strategies and priorities articulated in the Framework. Particularly, ‘*local communities’ self-sufficiency*’ is not apparent in the Strategy Summary, or in the remainder of the document, so it is difficult to see how the Framework will support this. We note ‘*a diverse local economy*’ is mentioned in the Strategy Summary, but this relates only to “*Farm and Estate Diversification*”, and not to supporting community entrepreneurship and enterprise. While the words chosen to express them varied slightly, all three Community Life Plans: Kinlochard, Stronachlachar and Inversnaid, and Aberfoyle (in development), included sustainability and autonomy as principles fundamental to positive change.

In all cases, this was associated with diversification of the economy ‘*by the community, for the community*’ away from over-dependence on Tourism. All acknowledged the essential role the tourist industry plays in the Strathard economy. However, many felt over-emphasis on tourism in the long-term was eroding the sustainability and viability of its permanent communities, and also that the industry may be subject to a law of diminishing returns. The negative impacts of this included the availability and cost of local property, and the risks associated with relying on an industry which was boom and bust, primarily seasonal, and characterised by low wage and skill jobs. The lack of good apprenticeship and career opportunities, affordable housing, and wages which could enable getting a foot on the property ladder, were held to be key reasons for the drain of young people away from Strathard.

In the Community Life Plans, economic diversification was seen as a way of reversing the decline, and essential for community sustainability in the 5-10 years ahead. This was associated with greater self-sufficiency driven by identifying and exploiting opportunities for community land ownership, enterprise, energy and housing. All of this is consistent with the vision of the Scottish Government extant in the Community Empowerment and Land Reform Acts. Yet while these basic needs and aspirations of residents are represented in the Vision of the Strathard Framework, we do not feel they are expressed strongly and explicitly anywhere in the subsequent strategy or priorities.

Without greater, explicit mention of economic diversification by and for the communities, or on residents' agreement on the need and aspiration for self-sufficiency, the document comes across as unbalanced and biased towards promoting tourism. This is particularly notable with regard to Aberfoyle. We also acknowledge this is probably not the intention, and may be the result of the Framework focusing on those aspects of development and land use which stakeholders feel they can directly influence. Nevertheless, even if this is the case, we would still welcome greater explicit support for these core elements of the Community Life Plans, or reference to them, in the Framework. Can we suggest an easy solution might be to link to an Appendix summarising the core Principles and Themes of the Life Plans?

Without this, the Framework can read as if no people actually live in Strathard other than those associated with the tourist industry. We are concerned that this emphasis on tourism as Strathard's main economic opportunity, could result in perceptions and decisions which will contribute to many of the concerns and toxic dynamics articulated by many Strathard residents in the Community Life Plans.

We should add that the lack of a strong follow-through of these points in the Vision, and the imbalance that results, is far and away our main issue with the Strathard Framework as it stands. Other than some minor points of detail, we consider the document to align extremely well with the Community Life Plans in all other respects.

P12. Strategy Summary

“Diversify the local economy in terms of providing space for people to work from home, including community business hubs, and diversification of land use to support community growing, local food production (honey, wild venison) and other employment opportunities in sustainable travel, education, childcare, essential community facilities/provision”

As already mentioned, this point outlines aspects of economic diversification which align with the Community Life Plans, but which do not appear explicitly anywhere else in the document after this. Community self-sufficiency -e.g. support for community housing, energy and enterprise- is not apparent in either the Strategy Summary or the remainder of the document. However, both economic diversification and community self-sufficiency are core elements of the Framework's Vision and the Community Life Plans. If they are not represented more strongly and clearly throughout the document, the Framework neither identifies nor shows how the Strategy or Priorities will achieve its holistic Vision.

General point about PRIORITIES

The numbering of the priorities throughout the Framework suggests a rank ordering. In almost all the sub-areas, the top priorities relate to Visitor Management. Without qualification that the priorities are *not* to be read in this way -and we assume they are not- the interpretation is unavoidable. Moreover, if the interpretation is coupled with a statement on page 7, which appears below, it could also be construed that all stakeholders involved in the development of the Framework support the ranking:

“The framework sets out the strategy for Strathard as a whole and for four identified sub areas. Within each area the types of changes identified are described, alongside priorities for action that were agreed through engagement and discussion with key stakeholders.”

To avoid any suggestion of this can we suggest that all numbering is dropped, and each of the sub-group area priority pages are given the same title as “Priorities for Overall Area”. Making the heading for all priority pages the same will also give the document greater consistency. At the moment these pages are mixed with some sub-areas stating Top 3 Priorities and others not.

Specific points on PRIORITIES

P 16. Priorities for the overall area

In “Priorities for the overall area” the first is Visitor Management, while Self-Sufficiency and Economic Diversification do not feature at all, but as stated, were core principles and priorities in the Community Life Plans. Without mention of these, it is difficult not to read the Framework’s economic priorities as being driven by a Green Tourism agenda.

P 17

The final priority is “Farm and Estate Diversification” and there is again an emphasis on tourism. This priority could be renamed “Economic Diversification” and include language which links it to the related point in the Strategy Summary, and which emphasises the community aspirations for self-sufficiency -community ownership, enterprise, energy and housing. This would go some way to linking the priorities to the Framework’s Vision, balancing the emphasis on tourism as set out in the Vision (P11), and improving alignment with the Community Life Plans.

P18 Landscape Qualities and Important Views

Views were mentioned as “Important Things” across all Community Life Plans, so this aspiration in the Framework is an excellent alignment.

We have two minor points:

- The Stronachlachar and Inversnaid Life Plan expressed strong consensus on two “iconic views” which carried significantly more weight than others. These were the views across of Loch Arklet from the East, and of Loch Katrine from the pier. On the basis of the importance of these “iconic views” to residents, we feel they should be identified explicitly on the map.
- *“Not all views are managed or require to be managed (as viewpoints) but all are publicly accessible and enjoyed by the public.”*

We are so pleased to see so many of Strathard’s great viewpoints marked on the map. However, these also entail places identified as “Important Things” requiring protection and preservation in their present state, for example, the Fairy Tree. Can we ask therefore that the Framework identify any viewpoints which ‘require to be managed’ and / or any subsequent intention to ‘manage’ a viewpoint be put out for consultation via the SCC, to ensure no harm is caused inadvertently to a cherished place?

THE FOREST

The vision and priorities align very well with those expressed for the forest areas in the Community Life Plans.

ABERFOYLE

The Key Characteristics (P25) and Priority 1 (P27) communicate the impression that the vision for Aberfoyle is solely to develop it as a tourist hub. The overarching principle and strongest theme in the Life Plan was community sustainability in a holistic sense, including community self-sufficiency, economic diversification (away from tourism), and local provisioning of services, housing and employment opportunities for young people. This included an aspiration for local projects and enterprises under community leadership and ownership, such as were articulated in the exploration of the viability of a community buyout of the Coop. This conception of 'Sustainability' -a core element of the Framework Vision, and principle and theme of the Aberfoyle Community Life Plan- does not seem to be represented in the Framework's vision and priorities for Aberfoyle.

P26 The Aberfoyle Community Life Plan identified the sculpture park as a great attraction and asset, and opportunity for tourist development and improvement, but it does not appear on the map.

P27 Priority 1

The need for artwork and mini-play areas was not raised by any residents in the Community Life Plan process. Can we ask where identification of these 'needs' came from? However, improvements to existing play parks were suggested by many.

Residents have expressed a desire to promote a distinct identity for Aberfoyle as a tourist destination in order to encourage a tourist profile that supports the aspirations agreed in their Community Life Plan. This includes promoting (particularly) Aberfoyle's rich history and heritage, and its tranquil beautiful character and nature, such as is identified in residents' "Important Things" and specific tourist focussed activities (such as walking and biking). This is not a criticism as in many respects, the aspiration is implicit throughout the Framework. However, it's inclusion or emphasis in the Aberfoyle priorities could strengthen the link and also partnership working between the community and stakeholders.

KINLOCHARD

With the exception of the Loch Ard Shore, the Exclusion Zones do not appear in the Framework, and particularly Exclusion Zone 2.

P29 *"New development opportunities are very limited in the immediate village environs and the Kinlochard Community Life Plan notes the priority to conserve areas of open land, rich in semi-wild and woodland habitats."*

The statement is welcomed and an accurate reflection of the community's consensus and aspirations as expressed in their Community Life plan. However, we note that the Exclusion Zone 2, which encompasses most of these naturally-rich "areas" is not included on the map. As is articulated in the Community Life Plan, these are some of the only local areas unaffected by commercial forestry and so are rich in native ecology, including numerous protected species. As such, Exclusion Zone 2 aligns strongly with the aspiration for promoting the native ecology and biodiversity enhancement gains which underpin the Vision and Strategy. The addition of Exclusion Zone 2 would demonstrate support for a community priority which is fully in alignment with the overarching aims of the Framework, while its omission weakens the credibility of these.

P31 Priority 1.

Discusses visitor management and its impact on the quiet environs of Kinlochard without any strategy or actions on how the increasing numbers of visitors, which threaten to overwhelm the ability of the village to cope, might be mitigated or redirected elsewhere. As was articulated in their Community Life Plan, Kinlochard is an exception in the Strathard area in that the village is a thriving cohesive community which exists almost entirely independently of the tourist industry. It features no attractions or services, and significant concern was expressed by residents that any attempt to enable or promote Kinlochard as a tourist village, or as a location for affordable housing, could provoke a turning point and a fundamental change in the character of the community from which there would be no turning back. It was this fear which underpinned the first principle in the Life Plan of “Strengthening Our Community”.

We therefore, do not understand why in a holistic plan where every other Strathard community in their Life Plans supports the principles-led development of affordable community housing and tourism, there shouldn't be greater emphasis on a visitor management and housing strategy which seeks to redirect visitors and housing developers to areas of Strathard where these things are needed and welcome. With regard to visitors, we would encourage promoting the wild shores of Loch Chon, which are beautiful, less patronised, and offer a wealth of opportunities consistent with the Framework Vision and Strategy. Priority 1 could promote Loch Chon as a means of relieving pressure on Kinlochard to conserve the sensitive shores and flora and fauna and help maintain the tranquil nature of the village. As a minimum this would make the problems we face, and our aspirations, official, which in turn may trigger mindful and corrective action within the context of a Strathard-wide visitor management strategy.

STRONACHLACHAR and INVERSNAID

P34 the map identifies a development opportunity near the Garrison. The Garrison was identified as an “Important Thing” by residents, and an area where new development should not be carried out. The opportunity related only to the refitting of the abandoned visitor centre and car park there which could provide a small museum, reusing what is already in place not encouraging more development. The icon on the map does not and cannot make this clear so can we ask that this be removed to avoid any unintended consequences of generalising a very specific point.

As mentioned previously, the iconic views, particularly Loch Arklet from the East, and Loch Katrine from the pier are not identified. These were agreed by consensus by residents participating in the Community Life Plans. Also not included are the Exclusion Zones, notably the “wild shores of Loch Arklet”, and which were equally important to local residents as the shore of Loch Ard were to Kinlochard.

P35 While references to self-sufficiency might be considered implicit in Priorities 2 and 3 and under Other Opportunities (specifically Housing/Economy), we believe it would benefit from being expressed more explicitly and strongly. The permanent resident community is in decline, with only one young family living locally. It is not too much to say that self-sufficiency and economic diversification were stressed in the context of them being an existential issue, where even a seemingly insignificant unsuitable development could have significant negative impacts.

We have noted earlier the decision to permit the Stronachlachar Storehouse development to proceed without any provision for affordable housing, despite this being expressed in their Community Life Plan as fundamental to local social and economic rejuvenation. There needs to be emphasis in the Framework which recognises the fragility of these remote communities, explicitly supports their autonomy, and can prevent planning decisions such as these.

Any proposed development should be able to demonstrate how it can contribute towards improving community facilities, active travel, bus service, waste water and broadband, as well as consolidating the existing tourism facilities if decline in this area is to be reversed. A lot of damage has been done and continues to endure as a result of changes to ways of living and working brought about by the decline of sheep farming and modernisation of Forestry and Waterboard working practices. Proactive intervention will be required to facilitate other opportunities to live and work year-round in these areas. These are well articulated by residents in their Community Life Plan and we believe they should receive appropriate emphasis in the Framework.

Appendix 1 – Indicative Delivery Plan

While the projects listed in the plan are fairly pragmatic and are supported by findings in the Strathard Framework document the list stops short of addressing the very real need identified by the Community Life Plans in regard to promoting economic diversity in the community as a whole. There is no read through from the project list as a means of delivering the wider ambitions identified in the Strathard Framework Vision statement in regard to promotion of diverse community economic development.

The SCC does not intend to provide comment against each of the projects listed however, a couple have been singled out as requiring more attention.

The first named project “**Masterplan village centre improvements / mobility hub**” cites as a mode of delivery “**Set up a steering group and commission consultant to prepare a design options for a mobility hub/public realm improvements, undertake consultation and funding.**”

There was a comprehensive Charrette study undertaken to support development of the current LLTNP Local Development Plan by Jura Consultants. Although produced in 2013 much of the work undertaken on behalf of the Aberfoyle element of the Charrette and identified in the Design section of the Charrette is still relevant today and supported by the recent Aberfoyle CLP engagement exercises as still being valid. We suggest that before re-commissioning a new study with all the implications of cost and getting sufficient community buy-in to make the study relevant the existing detailed and extensive Design report for Aberfoyle should be considered alongside the final outputs from the Aberfoyle CLP when they are to hand later this year.

The “**Renewables / Heat Networks**” suggests the delivery method “**Set up a project group, undertake feasibility study looking into energy heat hubs, coppice for biomass, heat pumps, district heating, run-river hydro**”. If this contained a reference along the lines of “and community ownership of land, assets and resources required to facilitate delivery” it would go some way to identifying the need for encouraging meaningful economic diversification for communities give recognition to work currently being undertaken by the community.

Finally, the Appendix must sit withing the Framework document not outside as it does at present.

In conclusion

As part of the Steering Group involved in the co-production of the Strathard Framework the SCC felt we had an obligation to address the draft version from the overarching perspective

of the communities we represent. In close consultation with CCN we have used the information in the Community Life Plans to guide and inform our review as the Life Plans are the voice of our residents.

The overwhelming perspective we have of the Framework is that the process of developing the document using the Steering Group was exciting and the outcomes are refreshing and in the main an honest reflection of consultations carried out over very many months of activity - but and there is always a but!

As we hope is clear from this representation, we believe the Framework would be a great alignment with the Community Life Plans if it were possible to more strongly, clearly and explicitly support the common desire across the communities of Strathard for greater autonomy, self-sufficiency, and economic diversification for the community and by the community (community ownership, enterprise, energy and housing). Long-term sustainability is an aim residents share with all stakeholders in the Strathard Framework, and these aspects are generally held and agreed by all of us to be a fundamental underpinning of this. Greater emphasis of these aspects, and nuance about what it means for each of the communities, we think would result in a more holistic and balanced document, which more consistently articulates how its Vision will be delivered through its Strategy and Priorities. Without this, as we have indicated, Tourism and Visitor Management come across as the overriding priorities for the next 20 years, 20 years where Climate adaptation is without question, our first and foremost priority, which in turn, is only achievable with mobilised empowered communities collaborating with Government. We hope these comments don't come across too much as negative criticism, as we genuinely believe the Framework is a pioneering exercise and document which on the whole express a consensus vision reached across diverse communities and stakeholders. However, we also hope sincerely that the comments, which take their weight from the needs and aspirations of a significant majority of residents of Strathard, will be fully considered and taken on board.

Response 26 – Strathard Community Trust

Summary

Strathard Community Trust welcomes the publication of the Draft Strathard Framework, and the co-production approach behind it. We appreciate that blending land use planning over decades with short and medium-term community aspirations and projects, is a new and at times not straightforward approach. While we have a number of both high level and detailed comments on the content of the document, we recognise and are grateful for the opportunity to participate in the process, and remain committed to participation.

The text below provides our detailed comments on each of the sections as they appear in the draft Framework, and also on the indicative projects set out in Appendix 1. In summary, we would like to make the following overarching points:

The balance of priorities seems to us much more towards those focused on the natural heritage than on the social and economic concerns highlighted by the community - for example, 8 of the 9 area-wide priorities are in this category. For clarity, this absolutely does not mean that we do not support nature conservation or green tourism objectives; rather we feel that a better balance is needed between these and others, and that such a balance could be achieved by adding detail in other headings.

Specifically, the two central issues of importance to the community which are less well covered are economic diversification in areas other than tourism, and housing. These are raised consistently in the Life Plans, as are other issues which we detail below, and while they are mentioned in the Draft Framework, we don't feel they are sufficiently prioritised as yet.

Part of the reason for this may be that community priorities are less well developed than those highlighted by other partners; this is not in any way to belittle the community aspirations, but rather to recognise that their development is at a much earlier stage at present. We appreciate that some of the indicative projects set out in Appendix 1 (for example, the proposed housing study) will help address this imbalance, but other, similar actions will be needed. We accept that some of the community priorities may fall outside the normal boundaries of the land use planning process – but even recognition in the framework that this is the case, and that these aspirations have been identified would be helpful, not least as a reference point for future funding bids.

The last summary point we would raise is in relation to the Scottish Government's net zero target for climate change emissions, and the interim target of a 75% cut by 2030. While the target in the abstract may be less important at community level, there is clear community interest in individual renewable energy projects and electrification of transport, already recognised in the Framework, for which climate change is a central driver. Achievement of the national targets, though, implies much wider changes, particularly in terms of the energy efficiency of buildings and wider patterns of resource use. We would suggest that a wider approach which includes but is not limited to the existing community priorities, would be helpful.

Climate change: Reducing greenhouse gas emissions - gov.scot (www.gov.scot)

Detailed Comments By Section

Introduction

This draft framework provides a long-term shared vision and strategy for the Strathard area of the National Park up to 2040. It trials a new approach by integrating land use management and development planning at a local scale...

...It is intended to guide and influence appropriate land use change and future delivery of development and infrastructure.

As this introductory text notes, the framework combines both traditional development control, in terms of identifying locations for possible activities, with some quite specific project-level aims. While we appreciate that this is not a straightforward task, and we recognise the tensions involved, we do not feel appropriate balance between these has yet been achieved;

in particular, housing and economic diversification to areas other than tourism seem to us understated.

In terms of its stage of development, the document states:

This draft framework is ambitious and clear on the changes that are needed in Strathard.

While we absolutely agree that this should be the end aim, we do not believe is not yet fully the case. It seems to us, for example, that many of the natural heritage and tourism management measures are more clearly focused and have a degree of momentum behind their delivery, compared to others – but the way these are discussed places them in isolation from the residents and local economy, rather than integral to it.

In contrast, many of the local project proposals are at this stage aspirations proposed as part of community consultation, or are translations to local level of Scottish Government national policies. This is not intended as a criticism, as we appreciate these issues have been raised by a strong process of community engagement. Rather, it is to highlight that more work is needed to develop ideas and test feasibility and desirability of different options for delivery. Ideally, the timetable for finalising the framework would take account of this; if this is not possible, we would at least like the final Framework to recognise areas which remain under development, even if these are outside the formal land use planning framework.

Similarly, while the importance of climate change / reaching net zero clearly comes across as part of the end goal of the framework, it is far from clear how that aim will be delivered, and the implications for the lives of residents or visitors over the next few years.

A last comment on this section is that it is not immediately clear how and when the framework will be finalised, and how it will, in practice, influence developments in future.

Context

This section provides helpful background, and we appreciate the tension between keeping material focused while providing enough to enable discussion. However, we believe this bullet point is overly brief as it stands: *There is an ageing and declining local population and a lack of affordable housing. Opportunities to provide more affordable housing are hampered due to flooding and/or other constraints within Aberfoyle.*

There are distinct, although related issues here which would benefit from more detail.

Firstly, our understanding is that, excluding immigration, Scotland's population as a whole is aging and declining. It would be helpful to know the extent to which trends in Strathard (or LLTNP more widely) mirror the national picture or differ from it, and in what ways. It would also be helpful to relate this to the stated population growth target for Strathard, the origin of which is not currently explained.

Secondly, much more detail is needed on housing, especially given the clear importance of affordable housing as an issue in community consultation in the area. We expand on this point below – we note that Appendix 1 proposes a housing study for the area, and we very much agree this would be a useful and high priority action.

The COVID-19 pandemic effects experienced in 2020 have exacerbated visitor management issues and impacted on local businesses, with some closing. The area was overwhelmed with day visitors and the associated pressures from car parking, littering and other negative damaging visitor behaviours.

While we clearly recognise this summary – and remain concerned about visitor impacts in the summer 2021 season - it seems likely that negative visitor impacts will at least in part be a short-term problem as a result of lockdown easing. It is more important for the coming years that the strategy is underpinned by the necessary information to enable longer term visitor management planning which takes account of wider changes, ranging from measures to reduce littering² to the more profound changes discussed in relation to patterns of transport use. Again, we note that Appendix 1 does propose future work in this longer term context.

For example, the introduction of the Deposit Return Scheme, currently set for 2022, should reduce considerably littering of drinks containers. Deposit Return Scheme | Deposit Return Scheme (zerowastescotland.org.uk)

Finally, but importantly, there is nothing in the context section about non-tourism business. While tourism businesses provide entry level jobs, the majority are seasonal and less well paid. Even if solutions are not immediately obvious, at least recognition of the need to consider the issue would be welcome.

Vision

We agree with aims of the vision overall, although we would suggest moving it closer to the start of the final document. We would also suggest moving the second sentence of the first paragraph to the end, to improve the flow, as below; this would also better reflect the importance of the community and local economy:

Strathard is a tranquil landscape and climate resilient place of outstanding natural beauty, with strong cultural heritage and cohesion. Outdoor access and eco-tourism work alongside a balanced visitor management approach and a diverse local economy to support the protection and promotion of this diverse and connected ecosystem and the wellbeing of local people and visitors.

Nature based solutions are used to manage flooding, improve and enhance infrastructure and facilities. The area acts as a carbon sink while supporting biodiversity, recreation and local communities' self-sufficiency.

While agreeing with the vision, our overarching view is that the framework overall does not (yet) provide sufficient detail on how the vision might be achieved. Some proposals in the framework are better developed than others; it seems to us, for example, that many of the natural heritage measures are more clearly focused and have a degree of momentum behind their delivery.

This is particularly clear in the subsequent section 5: **Strategy Summary**. While some of the suggestions are clearer than others, many come across as broad aims or as statements of issues of concern, rather than solutions. This is not in any way to belittle their importance to the community – rather it is to emphasise that these issues should have priority for more research, discussion and feasibility work in the near future to allow their form of delivery to be clarified and agreed.

As noted above, in practice the Delivery Plan Appendix provides some of this detail, and we comment on the projects listed in that document at the end of this response. It would be helpful to make links between the framework and delivery projects in the final version.

Priorities for the Overall Area

This section again illustrates the bias of worked up actions (8 of 9 described) towards the natural heritage. As above, this is not in any way to disagree with their importance in absolute terms, but rather to demonstrate the need for greater consideration of wider aspects of the rural economy to complement them. Neither non-tourism business nor housing feature in this list, despite being highlighted earlier in the framework.

While welcoming the inclusion of the one other priority (on renewable energy) we would suggest there would be benefit in taking a wider approach to considering options to climate change emissions at this stage, across Strathard as a whole. Reducing emissions from across rural Scotland will involve a step change in energy use in all existing buildings, as well as better build quality in new ones, in addition to the significant changes to transport systems already noted in the framework.

For these changes and associated measures to be taken up successfully requires clarity on what is likely to happen, and how communities in Strathard and similar areas might respond in ways which provide benefits - for example, through lower heating bills, transport costs or new economic opportunities – rather than being seen only as a cost or unwelcome restriction. This approach would be in line with the Scottish Government's Just Transition³ thinking.

<https://www.gov.scot/groups/just-transition-commission/>

Our involvement in discussions in the area to date suggests more is needed to achieve this level of focus. It is important to emphasise that there is already some experience in the area; a number of both private and public sector homes have renewable energy systems, and this is a field where Stirling Council has been particularly active.

We would also suggest that a positive approach to climate change emission reduction links to the importance of broadband coverage. As the past year has shown, good broadband facilitates the ability of residents to work at home, or from central locations like the Strathard Business Hub, reducing transport emissions as well as allowing local business people to connect with each other and help grow the non-tourism part of the economy. In the longer term, it seems likely that more services will be available on-line, at least in part, and lack of broadband presents a significant barrier to participation, especially for residents in the more remote parts of our area.

Some summary comments on specifics for individual areas are below.

The Forest

We welcome the focus on active travel, outdoor recreation and heritage across the area.

Aberfoyle

We welcome the recognition of the hub role played by Aberfoyle, and particularly pleased that the need to improve both paths and associated signage between Aberfoyle and the Lodge is included, as this will help connect visitors to local businesses as well as being in line with active travel aims.

We are also pleased to see the emphasis on improving the public realm, as this is an issue on which we have been working positively with Stirling Council. While there has been significant recent progress in regard to lower cost soft landscaping work, there remain issues with the condition of the car park. In our view, however, much of this is more about maintenance of an existing Stirling Council asset than requiring new action, as seems to be proposed in the framework.

We would suggest that the two main gaps in the identified priorities are:

- Firstly, the lack of mention of the need to upgrade the playpark, which has been an outstanding priority for some years; and
- Secondly, the need to consider views and aspirations of younger people.

Mentioned explicitly in the 2017-22 Community Action Plan, for example.

As noted above, these may be areas not normally covered by a land use plan, but at least recognition of their importance would be helpful.

We would further suggest that another area for consideration in this part of the framework, in keeping with the hub approach, should be facilities for camper vans (as is mentioned in the Stronachlachar section). Regardless of Covid, this is a part of the visitor market which has grown in recent years, and vans already use the overspill / wool centre part of Aberfoyle car park on an informal basis.

We clearly recognise the need for affordable housing, but also that there are differing views as to the type of housing which is needed and in which location. We therefore agree with the proposal in Appendix 1 for a formal housing study to be undertaken to examine these and other issues – this should take account of demographic issues. We welcome, but have no comments on the sections on **Kinlochard / Stronachlachar & Inversnaid**, other than to note that both mention the need for small scale workshops. We would suggest that the need and opportunity for such small-scale facilities could be considered across the area, including in Aberfoyle.

We also welcome the publication of the **Next Steps / Appendix 1 Delivery Plan** alongside the framework. The delivery plan helps bring to life the next steps which are being considered and the agencies and organisations expected to lead on those, and we would suggest that the final framework should include a section referring readers to updated progress reports on delivery.

Some comments on the specific projects are below, in the order they appear in the

Appendix:

Masterplan village centre improvements / mobility hub

This currently includes public realm improvements. As noted above, we consider some immediate public realm improvements are in reality business as usual maintenance work, and simply require budget and prioritisation, rather than further study. We would be more than happy to contribute to a steering group on longer term development work.

Tourism strategy/branding working in partnership with businesses to realise opportunities and continue events, website and heritage guide book.

SCT is named as the lead organisation for this, and one of our volunteers is continuing to rationalise and improve relevant websites. Our experience over the last three years, however, has been that business involvement in area-wide events has been sporadic. The contractors employed by the Trust through our Leader funded project ended up doing much of the work around events, rather than facilitating business involvement, as had been the original intention. Consequently, the Trust now takes the view that we are happy to support events and other specific initiatives to the extent we can, but only where these are business led.

Visitor Management Pressures in Kinlochard and The Forest

We are pleased to see this included as a long-term issue, rather than focusing only on the very significant but hopefully short term impacts evident in the summer of 2020.

Affordable Housing / Sites Audit

As above, we welcome a strategic approach to this, and are pleased it will also consider the role of tourism accommodation. It would be helpful for this to include small scale workshops for business as well, if possible.

Shuttle bus service (electric/hydrogen) – combined with parking management

While we welcome the inclusion of this as a pilot / research project, we are surprised to see that SCT is named as the lead body. A project of this type is well beyond our current capabilities, unfortunately, and would be more appropriately led by a statutory body.

Renewables / Heat Networks

As above, we consider that a more strategic approach to reducing climate change emissions would be helpful which maximises carbon savings and wider benefits from the available resource.

Signage Plan (for walkers and cyclists) / Aqueduct path and heritage routes / Active Travel route between Kinlochard and Aberfoyle

We welcome the work on all of these, and are happy to contribute. However, we would suggest that the Countryside Trust are more appropriately resourced to be the lead community body. We would also suggest that Bike Trossachs should be involved in signage, as the lead community body for cycling / Gravelfoyle, and the Heritage group, as best representing the interests of those interested in local history.

Aberfoyle to Stirling cycle network

We welcome this project, as we appreciate the benefits brought by our location on long distance routes. However, we also recognise the complexity and the long-term challenges involved in developing routes like this, which in this case are greatest outside our area. We are more than happy to take part in discussions, but we are not in a position to offer any practical support.

Network of EV charging for cars/bikes

With the recent UK Government announcement of the ban on sale of new petrol or diesel cars from 2030, it seems very likely that there will be a significant and near-term growth in the number of EVs on the road. Future proofing Strathard to support that change is very welcome.

Broadband connection for all households in Strathard

SCT is currently acting as the community partner for Stirling Council in this respect, and we are happy to continue this. As above, we view broadband improvement as an essential service to support the development of non-tourism businesses and to help cut carbon by

reducing the need to travel; in the longer term, as more public services move on line, improved broadband will increasingly enable older or less mobile members of our communities to access services.

Biodiversity Projects

As above, while we recognise the importance of these, they seem somewhat disconnected from the community. Opportunities to deliver these aims in ways which also help achieve community aspirations would be very helpful.

Response 27 – Landowner (Strandside Limited)

1 Executive summary

1.1 Our client, Strandside Ltd, welcomes and supports the aspirations of the draft Strathard Framework in terms of addressing visitor pressures and supporting low impact recreational activities. In particular, they welcome the draft Framework's commitment to exploring measures to address existing pressures with the community and landowners, and wish to play a pro-active role in this process. To this end, they wish to propose a number of changes to the draft Framework, as detailed below, to ensure that this delivers on these aspirations and, in doing so, aligns more closely with both the overarching policies of the Loch Lomond and the Trossachs National Park

Local Development Plan 2017 – 2021 (LDP) and the Kinlochard Community Life Plan (KCLP).

1.2 Specifically, as the owner of the land to the west of Kinlochard outlined in red and blue on the plans submitted with this consultation response, our client wishes to see the potential for this to provide a modest visitor attraction and tourist accommodation reflected in the draft Strathard Framework. As shown on the indicative plans submitted with this response and described in more detail in the Development Framework also submitted with this response, this would comprise visitor facilities in the form of a farm shop selling local produce, a small distillery, a café, and toilet facilities where there is currently an unused shed on the site (photos of which are attached as Appendix One, with that shed to be renovated and extended to this end), together with a management office for the site to also be located in the main building and accommodation in the form of a mix of cabins and yurts sensitively sited within the wooded landscape. At the same time, public access across our client's land would be improved, including through the provision of a viewpoint and picnic area, a new light weight timber footbridge across the water of Chon, and new planting to supplement existing features of the site.

1.3 For the reasons given in this response, it is believed that our client's proposals will help achieve the aspirations of the draft Framework and are also consistent overarching policies of the LDP and the KCLP. The proposed changes to the draft Strathard Framework outlined in this response should therefore be supported accordingly.

2 Responses to consultation questions and changes sought

In the interest of ensuring that the Strathard Framework delivers on its aspirations in terms of addressing visitor pressures and supporting low impact recreational activities, our client would respond to the consultation questions as set out below:

- **Pathway to change (questions 1 – 4)** – in addition to the changes captured on the pathway diagram, there should be a milestone for new visitor facilities and accommodation in the early part of the pathway, in the absence of which it is hard to see how the milestone of the area being renowned as an eco-destination with high quality outdoor recreation might be achieved;
- **Vision (questions 5 and 6)** – our client welcomes the vision's commitment to seeing outdoor access and eco-tourism working alongside a balanced visitor management approach and a diverse local economy;
- **Area wide strategy (questions 7 – 11)** – our client agrees that the priorities for the area should include addressing visitor pressures and supporting low impact recreational activities but, to achieve this, would like to see more support for proposals for new visitor facilities, including accommodation. In particular, our client would like to see more tourism opportunities identified on the area wide strategy map, including on their land;
- **Landscape qualities and important views (questions 12 and 13)** – our client agrees with the approach taken in the draft Framework and believes all important views are captured in this;

- **Kinlochard (questions 18 and 19)** – our client proposes a number of changes be made to the vision, key characteristics, priorities and opportunities as follows:
 - o **vision** - include an aspiration for improved visitor facilities and accommodation to create the balanced approach to managing visitors referred to in this, with this being consistent with the wider area vision in terms of its commitment to seeing outdoor access and eco-tourism working alongside a balanced visitormangement approach and a diverse local economy;
 - o **key characteristics** – remove reference to new development opportunities being very limited, in recognition of the fact that there are opportunities for sensitive development such as that proposed by our client as set out in their Development Framework, and acknowledge that the KCLP does not necessarily preclude development here, in particular where this would be consistent with the preservation of the existing habitats; and
 - o **whole area strategy** - include our client's land on the sub-area strategy map for Kinlochard as a tourism opportunity, with recognition given to its suitability for development of the nature shown on the indicative plans submitted with this response.

These changes should also be reflected in the Strategy Summary for Kinlochard as set out on page 12 of the draft Framework, from which our client would like to see the reference to development not attracting greater visitor numbers removed, and for recognition to be given to opportunities for glamping and other forms of appropriate tourist accommodation, as well as camping.

- **Delivery Plan (questions 22 and 23)** – in terms of priority projects that should definitely happen in the next two years, our client would like to see support for the development shown on the indicative plans submitted with this response, on the basis that this would play an important role in helping to realise the aspirations of the draft Framework.

- **Any final comments (question 24)** – generally, our client wishes the stated commitment in the draft Strathard Framework to exploring measures to address the pressures from visitors to Kinlochard more closely reflected in specific proposals and actions, including support for the proposals shown on the indicative plans submitted with this response, and, as set out in paragraph 1.1 above, is keen to play a pro-active role in helping achieve the draft Framework's aspirations in this regard. This is also important to ensuring that the Framework is of value as Planning Guidance and, subject to the comments above, our client supports the proposed use of the Framework in this regard as set out on page 8 with regards to use of the draft.

3 Policy context

3.1 Recognising the importance of ensuring that any proposed changes to the draft Strathard Framework are consistent with the wider policy context, key provisions of the LDP, the draft Framework, and the KCLP which lend support to our client's proposed changes are set out below.

Loch Lomond and Trossachs National Park Local Development Plan 2017 – 2021 (LDP)

3.2 The draft Strathard Framework makes it clear that this is intended to be used as Planning Guidance to accompany the adopted LDP for the National Park and help inform development decisions, with references made to overarching policies of the LDP made where appropriate in the context of the draft Framework. In this regard, it should be noted that the implementation of the LDP plays an important role in contributing to the achievement of the four aims of the National Park, including promoting:

- understanding and enjoyment (including enjoyment in the form of recreation) of the special qualities of the area by the public; and
- sustainable economic and social development of the area's communities.

3.3 Related to this, the LDP's vision is for a National Park that provides a high quality, authentic, experience for visitors, and within which businesses and communities thrive, with the Plan's strategy for development in the countryside likewise making it clear that the LDP encourages appropriately scaled development which enhances the visitor experience. In particular this is to be done by, amongst other things, supporting opportunities for the creation of new tourism services, facilities and accommodation throughout the National Park.

3.4 More specifically, the LDP's development strategy map identifies a large area of land around Kinlochard as having small scale tourism potential, with our client's land included in this area. Small scale is not defined in the LDP, but is understood to be development of a scale that constitutes local development in terms of the planning hierarchy, and is appropriate to the site context, both of which our client's proposed development would be (as can be seen from the Development Framework submitted with this response).

3.5 Importantly, our client's proposals as set out in the Development Framework would clearly support the delivery of the aims, vision and strategy outlined above in that it would deliver an enhanced visitor experience and employment opportunities in an area where there is a demonstrable need for these (on which, see relevant sections of the Draft Strathard Framework and KCLP in paragraphs 3.6 to 0 below), and the proposed changes to the draft Strathard Framework as set out in section 2 above should therefore be supported accordingly.

Draft Strathard Framework

3.6 In setting the context for the draft Strathard Framework, section 2 of this highlights that tourism drives the local economy and is the major employer in the area. It also highlights that there are existing visitor management issues, with these having been exacerbated by the COVID-19 pandemic. The area-based strategies set out in the draft Framework are then intended to capture opportunities to:

"...address these issues and enhance the environment, halt population decline and nurture sustainable communities living and working in the area, supported by services and facilities that can increasingly be accessed locally and digitally".

3.7 Visitor management also forms a key part of the vision for the draft Framework, the text of which includes the aspiration that:

"Outdoor access and eco-tourism work alongside a balanced visitor management approach and a diverse local economy to support the protection and promotion of this diverse and connected ecosystem and the wellbeing of local people and visitors."

3.8 Likewise, in setting out the key characteristics of Kinlochard itself, the draft Framework highlights that Loch Ard has grown in popularity for water-based recreation, but that the village has limited visitor infrastructure. Despite this however, the draft Framework states that new development opportunities in the immediate village environs are very limited, with reference made to provisions of the KCLP in terms of conserving areas of open land, rich in semi-wild and woodland habitats.

These provisions of the KCLP and other relevant provisions within it are considered in paragraphs 3.14 to 0 below, in light of which it can be seen that our client's proposals are consistent with the KCLP's aspirations in terms of conserving these habitats, with there being no reason to preclude development of the scale and nature proposed by our client as a result. This is particularly so given that our client's proposals would incorporate the redevelopment of the existing unused building on their land, in line with approach advocated

on page 8 of the draft Framework which states that new development should seek to redevelop existing buildings and brownfield sites in the first instance.

3.9 Lastly in terms of the key characteristics of Kinlochard, the draft Framework indicates that any new development in and around the village should be small scale and should also contribute towards improving facilities and infrastructure, including community facilities such as a shop, recreational infrastructure and tourism accommodation and facilities, all of which our client's proposals would do.

3.10 Reflecting the above vision for both the area as a whole, the key characteristics of Kinlochard, the strategy summary for the village as set out on page 12 of the draft Framework is for this to:

“Protect the tranquil qualities of Kinlochard and shores of Loch Ard, with support for more community facilities and infrastructure to support visitors whilst not attracting greater numbers...”

3.11 It is however limited in its vision for what form new facilities and infrastructure might take, stating that there is some potential for small-scale camping around Kinlochard, but remaining silent on other potential opportunities, although page 31 of the draft Framework makes it clear that there may be opportunities for glamping around the village as well (for further details on which, see bullet point 6(1) of paragraph 3.12 below).

3.12 Priorities and opportunities are then illustrated on Map 2 within the draft Framework, with more detail for the Kinlochard sub-area shown on Map 5, in terms of which it should be noted that:

- priorities for the whole area include addressing visitor pressures, which our client's proposals would do by delivering new visitor accommodation;
- the priorities for the whole area also recognise that there are opportunities to consolidate and enhance facilities at Loch Ard and to support low impact recreational activities, which our client's proposals would again do through the delivery of new visitor accommodation in the form of low impact huts and yurts, from which visitors will be able to enjoy other low impact recreational activities on and around the loch;
- while our client's land is not currently identified as a tourism opportunity, it is outwith the lochshore sensitive zones and visitor pressures areas shown on Map 5, with their proposals respecting these areas and intended to help relieve pressure on them;
- whereas land to the north west of our client's land is identified as a priority area for new native woodland, our client's proposals would again be consistent with this, with the proposed pods and yurts intended to sit sensitively in a woodland setting, and our client willing to provide new native woodland planting on their land in locations to be agreed with the community;
- priority one for Kinlochard is visitor management, in terms of which it is highlighted that there is an opportunity here to enhance and consolidate provision for the quiet recreational enjoyment of Loch Ard whilst carefully considering the impact of any proposal on community life and the ecology and tranquillity of the area, with solutions to address the pressures from visitors through a variety of mitigation measures to be explored with the community and landowners.

Specifically, such mitigation measures may include additional infrastructure and services as proposed in our client's proposals, with this clearly contributing to the achievement of priority one accordingly; and

• lastly, the draft Framework identifies a number of other opportunities for Kinlochard with which our client's proposals would align, including:

- small scale tourism, in terms of which it is highlighted that there may be opportunities for small-scale camping/glamping outside the immediate village environs of Kinlochard and that, while a potential site is identified to the south of Loch Ard, other

locations may also be suitable, with it submitted that our client's site should be considered suitable for this purpose for the reasons given in the Development Framework; and

- economic development, with potential opportunities for small scale economic development described as including small workshops/units for locally produced goods and retail, café or restaurant uses, with priority to be given to re-purposing existing buildings and sheds, which our client's proposal would do, with the large existing building on their land to be renovated and extended to provide facilities including a farm shop, café, and a small distillery, as described in the Development Framework.

3.13 It is also recognised that landscape quality is very important, and that all proposals should safeguard visual amenity and important views, as well as enhancing the landscape character and features. To this end, the draft Frameworks identifies a number of important views, with landscape appraisals required for any development proposals within a sightline of such a view. Our client's land is not however within the sightline of any of the identified views and this, along with the fact that their proposals combine the re-use of an existing building along with new cabins and yurts designed to sit sensitively in a woodland setting, as outlined in the Development Framework ensures that visual amenity would be protected.

Kinlochard Community Life Plan 2019 (KCLP)

3.14 The KCLP was prepared by the community of Kinlochard, and sets out a number of core principles, themes for action and guidelines for local development in the Kinlochard area. Fundamentally, the KCLP looks for anyone proposing to carry out development in the area to consider the core principles and themes for action in a holistic way before proceeding with any proposals, with it being essential to understand the interrelationships and interdependencies between the themes for necessary social, economic, and environmental regeneration to happen both effectively and sustainably. Recognising this, our client is committed to taking an appropriately holistic approach, and to working with the local community to deliver the infrastructure needed to facilitate the regeneration that is sought.

3.15 In terms then of the guidelines for economic development such as that proposed by our client, the KCLP generally supports development that would make non-harmful use of the outdoor environment, capitalises on existing tourist traffic, and supports independent local businesses and/or provides stable local employment, all of which our client's proposals would do, with the proposed cabins and yurts designed to complement the woodland setting as set out above, the farm shop intended to stock local produce, and the development as whole intended to provide local employment.

3.16 At the same time, while it is noted that the KCLP establishes an exclusion zone for new development around the village (with the land which our client proposes to development being included in exclusion zone 2), it is stated that development will still be permitted here if it increases the economic value of community assets which, in providing new tourist accommodation to relieve pressure on the village and lochshore, our client's proposals would do. At the same time, our client's proposals would present no conflict with the aspirations of exclusion zone 2, those being to conserve the open spaces and the naturally rich native semi-wild and woodland habitats within and around Kinlochard village. Rather, our client's proposals would be consistent with these aspirations by siting cabins and yurts sensitively in the woodland landscape as set out in above and in the Development Framework, thus retaining the existing habitats and facilitating their management to ensure these continue to make a positive contribution to the setting of Kinlochard.

4 Conclusion

4.1 For the reasons given in this response, it is believed that our client's proposals will help achieve the aspirations of the draft Srathard Framework and are also consistent overarching policies of the LDP and the KCLP. The proposed changes to the draft Framework outlined in this response should therefore be supported accordingly.

Appendix to this response is saved separately.

Response 28 – Resident and Landowner

This tone is high on concepts but low on detailed action.

1. Agriculture

Livestock farming in Strathard is virtually ended -there are now no livestock on the Comer and Drumlean and only horses at Frenich. XXX are the last sheep farm in the Strath though the XXX does winter B-face hoggs. This obviously impacts on land usage.

Farm diversification is hardly touched upon nor is job creation for young people to give a long-term future for rural communities.

2. Renewable Energy.

More could be made of this. We have a 100 kw hydro turbine -all of which is sold to the Grid. For our own use we have 109 solar panels, generating up to 30 kw per hour and with 9 kw of storage batteries.

3. Tree planting

XX have planted 40 ha of hardwoods(principally oaks and Scots Pine) More could be made of hardwood plantations not least by the Forestry Commission..

4. Visitor Management

It does not address the demand for access to Loch Ard and the limited facilities for that access e.g. the Community Field. There is no visitor management at Kinlochard -no toilets, no parking , no waste collection(Council policy).

The village hall could be the answer once the fire damage has be repaired. Loch access is very limited on the North shore.

5. Sewage

Kinlochard has the only public sewage with only one customer, Forest Hills. Scottish Water renaged on their promise to pump sewage from Kinlochard village to the system thus effecting water quality in Loch Ard.

This has to be addressed.

6. Affordable Housing

Kinlochard population is both decreasing and aging. We need young people with housing and jobs, preferably tourism related.

7. Wild Goats.

Compared with the ravages of red deer, goats being much fewer in number are less of a problem. By the way they are Wild goats not feral goats and produce cashmere! Normal control over excess male kids is important.

8. Car pressures of the future.

Yes petrol/diesel vehicles are going to reduce but I suspect that electric vehicles will replace them.

Response 29 - Resident

General

First, I agree that this is an particularly opaque document, full of public service buzzwords and jargon, the meaning of which is ill-defined. I found it impossible to precis or pick out the defining sentence of each paragraph. However, I think few would disagree with the general sentiments of the document, even if the detail, such as it is, might be contentious.

Second, while the sentiments of what is to happen are easily agreed, the strategy, or even the "direction of travel" for how to get there is strikingly absent.

Third, the timescale is very slow. Much of what is discussed should be in a five year plan.

Thus, my comments focus on the Indicative Delivery Plan:

The priorities in this plan are not defined, but one is struck by the number of "Priority 1" tasks. There is a smattering of other priorities, even a Priority 6 (which is best addressed at a national level)

There is a lot of emphasis on setting up steering groups/project groups/consultancies. I would like to see a full list of these, and particularly those which have already reported. I suspect that many areas addressed in the strategic plan e.g. Aberfoyle - Stirling cycle route, have already been studied but have not been implemented. (I would also recommend in this case that Sustrans be required to erect large signs instructing cyclists to use such routes, including NCR 7, to get them off the main roads.)

Housing/Tourism/Economic Development

Housing

The phrase "affordable housing" makes me grind my teeth. XXXXX Edinburgh. XX saw some shockers, all built as "affordable housing", and each one represented a tragedy for a young couple buying their first home. They had been re-possessed, the build quality was shoddy - i.e. they were falling apart - and the owners were no doubt deep in debt and unable to buy another property. Worse, I was told by a surveyor friend that the bolts holding these steel-framed buildings together have a design life of 40 years. These "affordable homes" are a depreciating asset.

So, yes, there is a shortage of accommodation for first time buyers, and the way to keep prices down is to build lots of it. Make sure that Scottish Architecture approves the build quality, but also make sure they do not approve something that looks like a pile of rubble with an old bicycle on top of it.

There is, equally, a chronic shortage of larger and more valuable housing, as evidenced by the very rapid sales of property in recent months. We should welcome incomers (like me) who bring wealth and opportunity to the community, rather than regarding them with distaste as driving out an indigenous population. Again, satisfying demand is the key to keeping prices down. There should not be a shortage of building sites across the area, either around our villages, or at derelict sites, or on the many pockets of land in the forest which FLS are sitting on with no intention of planting trees. Nor should such sites be considered "off grid"; the DNOs and other agencies - water, sewage, and telecoms, should be required to connect to such properties.

Tourism

Most of our visitors are day trippers. They make the minimum of economic contribution to the community, except for the bars and tea rooms. Many drive here, walk or cycle (which earns no revenue to us) get back in their cars, and go. Usually, by 4 o'clock, the place is dead. Those that do stay are fed in their B&Bs or hotels; there is no night-life.

Part of the problem is a lack of facilities. Apart from the walking/cycling - and the Forest Hills water resort - there is nothing to do here, and little to entertain e.g. a family from Holland visiting for a week. Local enterprises should be encouraged to set up other recreational facilities, such as "Go Ape".

There is a chronic lack of accommodation. Large chalet/apartment blocks could be built in the forest with minimal impact on the environment. Even for camper vans, which are becoming increasingly popular, there are very limited facilities at camp sites for emptying cassettes, water replenishment, showers, or laundry. The camp site on Loch Chon offers only very primitive ablutions and there are no facilities for cooking/washing up or laundry.

There are few restaurants and they offer limited menus of "chips with everything". We should be encouraging more eateries offering a range of food qualities and styles. In particular, there is no refreshment point, other than the Forest Hills hotel, between Aberfoyle and Stronachlachar. Again, restaurants or tea rooms should be encouraged on the walking /cycling trails, either for passing trade or to become destinations in themselves.

Signage. In 2019, I received the following message from Dave Robinson, Recreation and Access Adviser: " As an access team, we do produce and erect advisory signs, but these are to deal with instances of persistent irresponsible or anti-social behaviour, or to replace misleading and non-compliant signs. And even then, we ask landowners to pay for their production." There is a chronic lack of signage across the area, as evidenced by a couple I met on Saturday, who were lost and did not have a map because Visit Scotland had assured them that there were signs everywhere. There are not. However, this is not a strategic problem, whether on existing or new routes (The Aqueduct Trail). It could be rectified over one winter if the National Park was so minded.

Visitor Management. This is a very large subject allied to some of the factors mentioned above. Many of the lack of facilities referred to should be allowed by the planning system to grow organically rather than be centrally planned. However, if many visitors presently throng to Kinlochard, where they are not welcomed, an alternative site should be developed to attract them. Loch Chon might be an obvious candidate.

I have given much thought to the question of transport infrastructure, where there is the problem of inadequate roads - for heavy plant traffic and tour busses to and from Inversnaid - and Life Plans resisting the widening of the road (though the plea for more passing places is a sort of compromise). I do not believe a fleet of shuttle busses, electric or otherwise, will solve this.

My idea is to construct a gondola/cable car from a large car park in the vicinity of the Rob Roy going all the way up to the T junction at Loch Arklet, where it could meet up with another stretching from Inveruglas to SLA. There would be 'stops', i.e. places to get on and off, at Aberfoyle, KLA, Loch Chon camp site, and Glen Arklet, and these are possibly places where the cable would need to change direction, i.e. the gondolas would need to transfer from one cable to another. I would suggest each gondola could carry up to 4 people, and possibly be fitted with a rack to carry bicycles. There are several advantages to such a mode of transport:

1. There would be no need to wait for a bus;
2. It would probably be quicker than driving, so more attractive to day trippers than taking the car;
3. There would be better views of the countryside than from a car;
4. It would have minimal footprint;
5. It would be very quiet and unobtrusive;
6. It would be very 'green' as it would be driven by electricity;
7. It would not be affected by flooding;
8. It would be relatively cheap (compared with rebuilding the road) to construct;
9. It would provide employment for locals to run and maintain it.

Heavy traffic should be routed through the forest.

Economy

As SCC and SCT have pointed out, whilst the tourist sector is important, it is just as important to develop our non-tourist economy. There is actually a shortage of labour in the community, not the other way round. There is a shortage of light industrial units; many of our entrepreneurs work out of their houses. There is also a lack of 'outlets' for our creative sector to sell their produce. The lack of broadband to the hinterland of Aberfoyle is a major impediment to economic development but hopefully is being rectified by SC/Scottish Govt. Another factor outwith the control of the National Park is the discouragement of entrepreneurial ambition by our local schools.

There is probably quite a bit more to be said on this subject, but crucially, we must not allow ourselves to be totally dependent on a tourist economy.

Flood Management

I have observed the effectiveness of a log/debris dam XXXXX. Where the track crosses a stream at GR 483994, there was a narrow culvert partially blocked by a traffic cone. During heavy rain, this held the water back until it reached the level of the road. Unfortunately, the road was being washed away. So, FLS rebuilt the road and put in a much larger culvert, and the water flows away freely. They also built a log dam about 200 m south of it. I have never seen any significant amount of water held back by this dam, even when Aberfoyle is hit by severe flooding.

Flood management is a complex subject but needs a higher priority than 2. The effect of flooding on tourism and economic development, quite apart from the inconvenience it causes to the population, is too severe to let it slide, or be subject to the environmental fashions of the day.

Flooding is of the greatest concern to our population. It overshadows almost all our endeavours, particularly planning, the use of the car park as a venue for a market, access to Inversnaid/Stronachlachar – further restricted by FLS putting gates across the secondary access road. Numerous studies have been carried out to solve this problem but the result is an inelegant unaffordable scheme which seems unlikely to be carried out.

There is anecdotal evidence that 50 or so years ago the river bed was deeper and flooding occurred less frequently. In those days, before the inception of SEPA, the river was sensitively managed at a local level.

Conclusion

The three most important things that need to be addressed if Strathard is to thrive are, in order of importance:

 Flooding

 Accommodation, including housing and visitor accommodation

 Communications, to and from Strathard, and within the community.

If these three things can be fixed, our young people can be persuaded to stay and the population will be rejuvenated. The labour shortage will be addressed if it is easier for people to travel to and from the community, especially if out-of-hours transport can be provided.

The National Park needs to make decisions about visitor facilities, in particular the use of water recreation on either Loch Ard or Loch Chon, and FLS/LLTNP need to show flexibility in allowing more visitor recreation. The camp site needs to be upgraded to modern standards.

Improving signage should not be a big issue – it should be routine!

Response 30 – Stirling Council – Transport Development, Public Transport, Countryside Access, Development Planning, EV Development

Requested not to be published fully but permission was provided to give a summary in the analysis to the comments.

