

# STRATHARD & THE TROSSACHS | PLACE PROFILE

This place profile brings together communities of place in an area of similar geographies, land use and local living. It sets out an introduction to the evidence we will use to inform the new Local Development Plan and covers three themes relating to the vision and chapters of the National Park Partnership Plan:

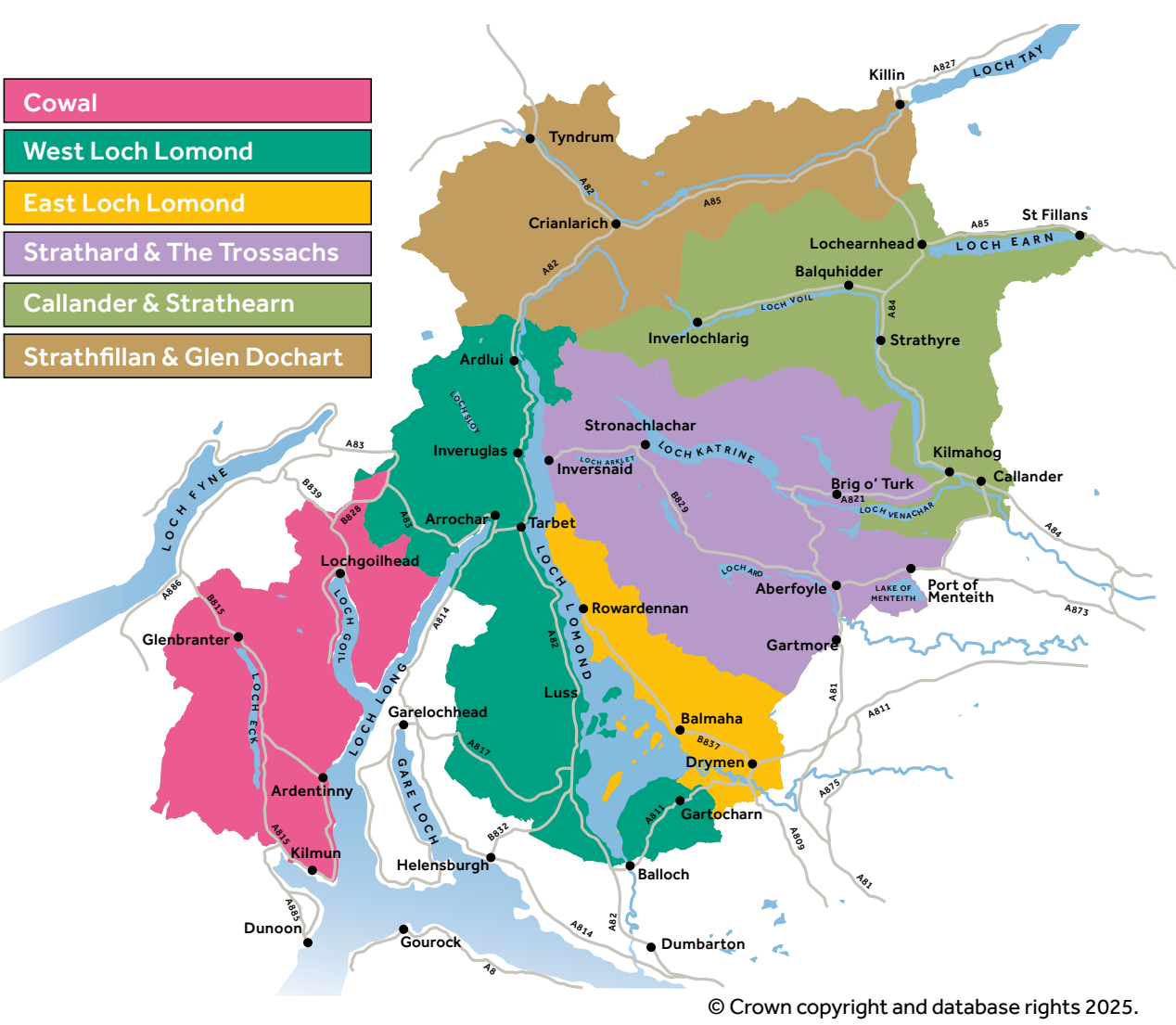
A NATURE POSITIVE PLACE  
RESTORING NATURE

A CARBON NEGATIVE PLACE  
CREATING A LOW CARBON PLACE

A THRIVING PLACE  
DESIGNING A GREENER WAY OF LIVING



## ABOUT STRATHARD AND THE TROSSACHS



### DEFINING THE PLACE

This area lies in the centre and east of the National Park, stretching northwest towards the narrow north of Loch Lomond and across the Trossachs towards Breadalbane in the east.

Its main settlements are Aberfoyle and the Conservation Area Village of Gartmore. There are a number of smaller hamlets including the Port of Menteith, Kinlochard, Stronachlachar, Inversnaid and Brig O'Turk, and rural homes and farms.

### Community Council Wards

- › Strathard
- › Trossachs
- › Gartmore
- › Port of Menteith to the extent of National Park boundary

### Local Authorities

- › Stirling Council



## A PICTURE OF THE PLACE

This area of the National Park incorporates The Trossachs' many hills, lochs and forests.

Queen Elizabeth Forest Park is home to wildlife including red squirrel, and offers recreation opportunities such as hiking, cycling and horse riding. The area's many lochs and smaller lochans also provide water activities and habitats.

Relatively sparsely populated, the area is a popular tourist destination with Aberfoyle as the main visitor hub and tourism driving the local economy. It is accessible to the central belt of Scotland, albeit primarily by car with limited public transport options, although a successful pilot shuttle bus service operated in summer 2024.

Beside Port of Menteith lies Scotland's only lake, the Lake of Menteith, featuring several small islands with the largest the historic Inchmahome, home to an ancient priory, which was historically visited by Robert the Bruce and acted as a refuge for Mary Queen of Scots. The lake is a popular fishing location for rainbow and brown trout.

Loch Katrine, another historic location, inspired Sir Walter Scott's writing, and hosts the Sir Walter Scott Steamship. Loch Katrine has served as the main water supply for Glasgow for more than 150 years.

There are many popular hills in the area, particularly Ben A'an and Ben Venue, as well as higher mountains to the north.

Communities and landowners in the area have worked together in recent years to develop the Strathard Framework, to address issues such as climate change, infrastructure, sustainable development and growth, species management, biodiversity, local economy and tourism.

## PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT IN STRATHARD & THE TROSSACHS



### NATIONAL STRATEGIC INFRASTRUCTURE IDENTIFIED IN NATIONAL PLANNING FRAMEWORK 4

This area is home to National Infrastructure as shown in National Park Partnership Plan; electricity transmission lines to the west.

### NATIONAL PARK PARTNERSHIP PLAN DELIVERY TO BE CONSIDERED

'Successes so far' in this Plan, highlights the 'Strathard Framework' that was prepared jointly by the Strathard Community Council, the Strathard Community Development Trust, the National Park Authority and Stirling Council. The nearby town of Callander is highlighted in the National Park Partnership Plan as an area for strategic investment and development.

### DEVELOPMENT ACTIVITY - PLANNING APPLICATIONS

The recent development activity this area is experiencing is housing, tourism and retail.

The Strathard Framework sits alongside our Local Development Plan as planning guidance, but it is also a holistic document to be used to influence land use decisions, including large-scale conservation projects and strategically guide visitor management and public realm work.

In the theme 'A Thriving Place: greener economy and investing', the most significant planning applications for the area in recent years are listed and mapped to indicate the development activity to help illustrate how planning policies are used.



## REGISTERED LOCAL PLACE PLANS TO BE TAKEN INTO CONSIDERATION

### STRATHARD COMMUNITY LIFE PLANS (CLP): KINLOCHARD; STRONACHLACHAR/INVERNSNAID; ABERFOYLE

The community stresses that each CLP constitutes a dynamic, integrative, whole-systems model of what a specific community has agreed, by consensus, is the best route to regeneration and a just transition, and requests they are material considerations in planning decisions. Each CLP must be considered in totality, but shared priorities are:

- › Becoming Sustainable Communities
- › Restoring the Natural Environment
- › Address and adapt to flooding
- › Maintaining and Upgrading our Infrastructure
- › Improving Visitor Management (excessive pressure from visitors)



### PORT OF MENTEITH PLACE PLAN (NOT YET REGISTERED)



With a strong sense of community valuing the natural surroundings, some challenges are faced particularly with lack of access to the countryside, poor connectivity and lack of open spaces. Roads are dangerous, and there are a lack of visitor facilities and a need for more local housing. Improved environmental stewardship is required. Priorities include:

- › Moving around and connectivity.
- › Improving public open spaces, play/recreation and visitor facilities.
- › Satisfying housing needs.
- › Improving road safety.
- › Invasive species removal.

### TROSSACHS PLACE PLAN

This community is proud of its natural assets and people. Challenges include a reducing and ageing population, compounded by no primary school, lack of housing for local people and families and viability of local services. Car travel dominates due to poor public transport services, which does not help towards Net Zero. Priorities include:

- › Ensuring assets and spaces work well together and increase outdoor recreation facilities.
- › Securing sustainable public transport and connectivity with other villages.
- › Ensuring appropriately sited/designed housing and reducing second/holiday homes.
- › Tackling climate change impacts through energy renewable/efficiency, active travel, and improving biodiversity.



### GARTMORE PLACE PLAN



This community is a conservation village with a vibrant community and several community-owned assets. However, the community faces challenges of a rapidly increasing ageing population and reduction in young people. Car use is the dominant form of travel, which adds to carbon emissions. Priorities include:

- › Improving outdoor access and land management.
- › Adapting to and mitigating climate change.
- › Improving community facilities and capacity.
- › Improving integrated transport system.
- › Sympathetic expansion of affordable housing.



# A NATURE POSITIVE PLACE

## UNDERSTANDING THE PLACE

National Planning Framework 4 (NPF4) is our national spatial strategy for Scotland. It sets out regional priorities for this theme as follows: “Loch Lomond and The Trossachs National Park has landscape-scale opportunities to restore and enhance nature and respond to climate change, including through woodland creation and peatland restoration, as well as natural flood risk management.”

This is an introduction to the data and information (evidence) for A Nature Positive Place outcomes to be used in developing the new Local Development Plan.

### LAND USE

Scotland’s Third Land Use Strategy 2021-2026 Getting the best from our land, is a useful visioning tool for what our landscapes could look like, providing illustrated examples for different areas. Land use in this area includes three of the seven illustrative landscapes: Settlements, Semi-natural land and Rivers and water bodies. The predominant landscapes are:

- **Semi-natural land** - wide-ranging landscape category which includes mixed farmland, forests, hills, mountains and moors, and is central to delivering how multifunctional landscapes can deliver holistically for people, climate and nature here.
- **Rivers and water bodies** - some of our greatest natural assets: contributing to health and wellbeing; supporting a rich diversity of wildlife; and providing the basis for sustainable economic activity such as tourism.

### LANDSCAPE

Human activity and natural processes shape our landscapes and the distinctive landscape of the area and its Special Qualities are important.

#### LANDSCAPE CHARACTER

The Landscape Character of the area is diverse, with ‘Straths and Glens with Lochs’ against the backdrop of ‘Highland Summits’ at the more northern areas. Glen Finglas is an ‘Upland Glen’. The forests of Loch Achray and Loch Ard are ‘Rolling Forested Plateau’, alongside the ‘Parallel Ridges’ landscape character type through the forested areas running from Gartmore towards Callander. Between Aberfoyle and Port of Menteith the landscape opens into ‘Rolling Farmland and Estates’, with the Lake of Menteith set amidst ‘Lowland Peatland with Lochs’ to its west and south.

#### SPECIAL LANDSCAPE QUALITIES

- Special qualities of the landscape in Strathard and The Trossachs include:
- **The Trossachs**
  - A traditional ‘Gateway to the Highlands’
  - A harmonious concentration of lochs, woods and hills
  - Rugged Ben Venue, the centrepiece of the Trossachs
  - Loch Katrine, the ‘Queen of the Trossachs’
  - A landscape of beautiful lochs
  - The romance of the Trossachs
  - The resort of Aberfoyle and the Duke’s Pass
  - The curious wooded hillocks of Aberfoyle
  - The tranquil Lake of Menteith

#### WILD LAND AREAS

Wild land areas are the most extensive areas of high wildness. They are identified as nationally important in National Planning Framework 4 but are not a statutory designation. The (07) Ben More – Ben Ledi Wild Land Area (WLA) is in the north of this area.

This is to be viewed alongside *A Nature Positive Place: Issues and Opportunities*.

For more information on this theme, please go to the Topic Papers listed below:

1. **Climate Change and Land Use**
2. **Biodiversity, Natural Places, and Forestry, Woodland and Trees**
4. **Flooding, Water Management and, Blue and Green Infrastructure**

The Strategic Flood Risk Assessment (SFRA) Report and Map also provide more information.

### NATURE

#### DESIGNATED SITES

Nearly a fifth of our most special designated sites for nature are in decline across the National Park. This area is rich in protected sites, reflecting the high nature value and potential in the area. Stretching west to east across the north of the area is The Great Trossachs Forest National Nature Reserve (NNR). The River Teith Special Area of Conservation (SAC) extends eastwards towards Callander along the Lochs from the Dam at the eastern end of Loch Katrine, adjacent to Trossachs Woods Special Area of Conservation (SAC). There are multiple SSSI sites across the area including Lake of Menteith and woodland sites, along with a number of Geological Conservation Review sites including Duke’s Pass.

Landscape designations include The Trossachs National Scenic Area (NSA).

#### PRIORITY SPECIES

The south and west of this area is within the Highland Line Priority Area – Argyll Trossachs and Stirling for Saving Scotland’s Red Squirrels. The project is defending the core red only population of the Highlands and Aberdeenshire by carrying out targeted landscape -scale grey squirrel control along the highland boundary fault line.

Beavers are present throughout the area by both natural dispersal and a controlled release into the Loch Ard Forest by Forestry and Land Scotland (FLS) in partnership with the Beaver Trust. The releases in Loch Ard Forest help to support and increase this new, naturally expanding population. An ongoing NatureScot survey will provide a clearer picture of beaver distribution in the coming months.

### WATER AND CATCHMENTS

This area is a landscape of straths and glens with linear lochs. This area is within the water catchment of Leven to the northwest of area, with the majority of the area in the Forth catchment. The River Basin Management Plans for Scotland set out a range of actions to address significant problems affecting water quality, physical condition, water resources, and the migration of wild fish.

### CARBON STORAGE AND EMISSIONS

Our peatlands have significant potential to store carbon however those peatlands are currently a source of greenhouse gas emissions, as exposed and drained peatland soils actively release greenhouse gases into the atmosphere and water courses. Addressing the priority area for peatland restoration identified southwest of Loch Ard and north of Loch Katrine will reduce the amount of emissions, create the conditions for carbon capture, improve water quality and storage, bringing many other benefits for climate, nature and people.

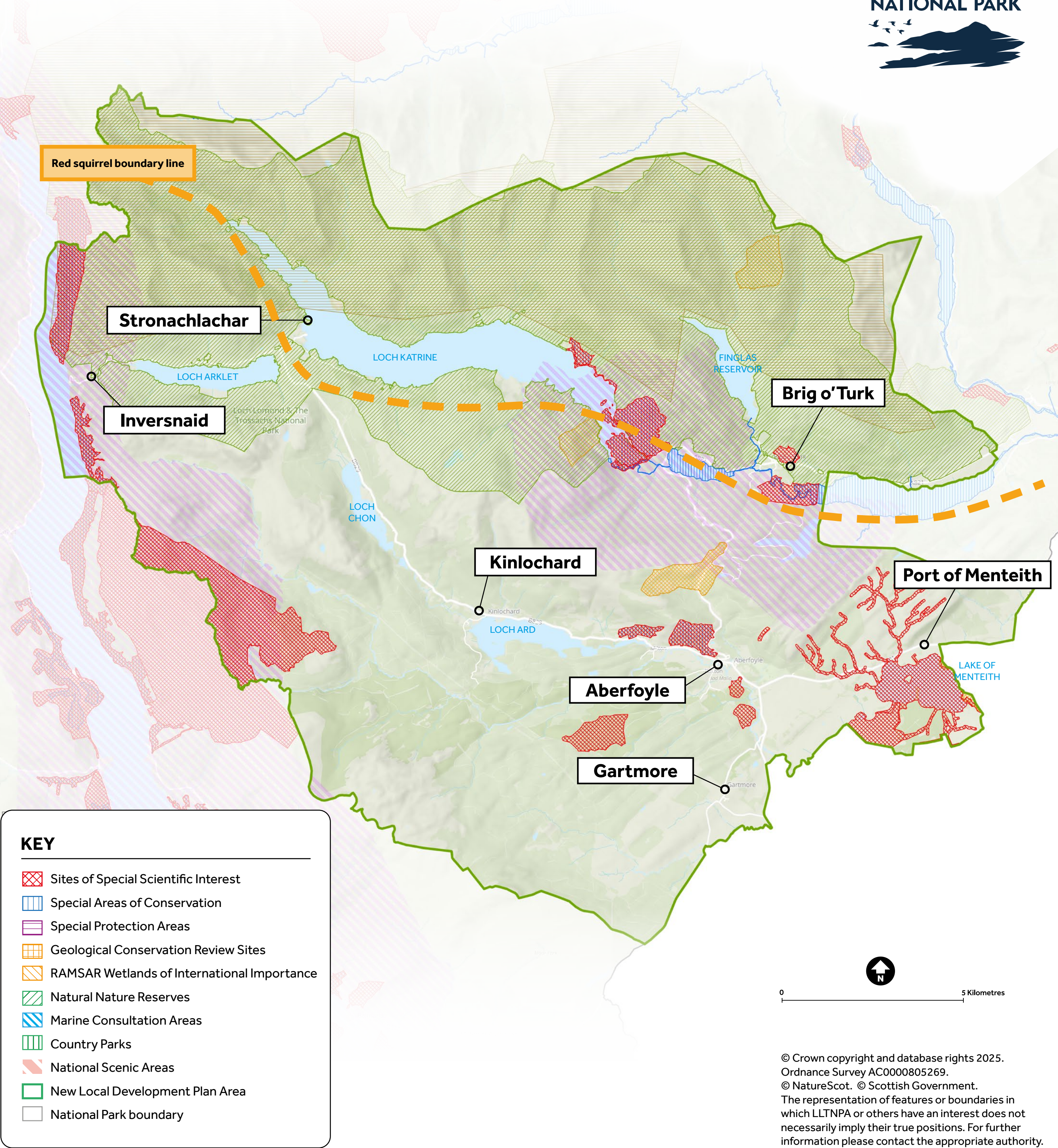
This is a wooded area, home to Great Trossachs Forest, Achray Forest, Loch Ard Forest and other areas of native woodland and commercial forestry, and these areas have great potential to store even greater volumes of greenhouse gases and act as carbon sinks.

#### AREA BASED PLANS AND STRATEGIES

- In addition to the Topic Paper and Local Place Plan references, the following information is local to this area:
- Deer Management Group Plans and Count Surveys
  - Strathard Framework
  - Aberfoyle Flood Studies – Stirling Council
  - Loch Katrine Land Management Plan – Forestry and Land Scotland

### STRATHARD & THE TROSSACHS

## A NATURE POSITIVE PLACE | UNDERSTANDING THE PLACE MAP



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# A NATURE POSITIVE PLACE

## ISSUES AND OPPORTUNITIES

This is an introduction to the data and information (evidence) for A Nature Positive Place outcomes to be used in developing the new Local Development Plan. This is to be viewed alongside *A Nature Positive Place: Understanding the Place*.

### ISSUES

#### CLIMATE CHANGE

The map shows climate change risks in the Loch Lomond & the Trossachs National Park (March 2024) Climate Change Adaptation Risks and Opportunities Assessment study:

- **Aberfoyle** – flood risk, increased precipitation and storms.

➤ **Port of Menteith** – flood risk, storms, increased precipitation, wildfires and reduced water availability/drought.
- **Brig O’Turk** – flood risk, increased precipitation and storms.

➤ **Inversnaid** – Flood risk, increased precipitation, storms and wildfires on the hills.

We will also draw on the Stirling Council Climate Strategy (Draft November 2024).

#### AREAS VULNERABLE TO FLOODING

The Local Plan District is Forth; this is the geographical area where flood risk management plans are used to manage flood risk.

Based on SEPA Future Flood Maps V3.0 the settlements within Strathard and The Trossachs are vulnerable to both river and surface water flooding. Aberfoyle is in a community based Potentially Vulnerable Areas (2024). Potentially Vulnerable Areas are specifically defined areas where the risks to property from flooding, and the estimated average annual damages occurring as a result of flooding, are greatest.

Aberfoyle, particularly the areas of Main Street and Lochard Road, often experiences flooding from the River Forth. Aberfoyle and the wider Strathard area are particularly sensitive to flooding due to the solitary access route beyond the A821, the B829, being regularly cut off due to flood water.

#### INVASIVE NON-NATIVE SPECIES (INNS)

Invasive non-native species are a pressure here; this includes riparian species and rhododendron.

#### TREE HEALTH

Phytophthora ramorum (affecting Larch), and the resultant changes to the landscape and nature are a pressure here. The area is in the Phytophthora ramorum (affecting Larch), Priority Actions Zone (where actions will have the greatest impact on controlling spread).

#### HERBIVORE PRESSURES

Herbivore pressure is an issue here. To achieve objectives for habitat recovery and Nature Networks, sustainable management of herbivores is required through continued partnership working with landowners and land managers.

#### WATER AND WATER QUALITY

The Strathard Framework highlights a need to improve water quality and ecological value of all water bodies by working with key stakeholders to restore salmon spawning grounds, tackle invasive non-native species, improve riparian edge by creating permanent native woodland habitats along the banks of burns and rivers, reduce diffuse pollution and improve foul drainage systems including Scottish Water assets and private waste treatment.

### OPPORTUNITIES THROUGH PARTNERSHIP WORKING

#### NATURAL CAPITAL APPROACH

NatureScot is leading the development of an innovative new tool that will facilitate decision makers to take a natural capital approach for managing land at the landscape scale in Scotland. The intention is that this tool will support integrated and collaborative approaches to land management and, if available, will be used within the evidence base.

#### NATURE NETWORK OPPORTUNITIES

This map illustrates the National Park Partnership Plan main priority areas for nature restoration efforts across three key habitat types, as part of a Nature Network approach:

- Peatland Restoration in the uplands south of Loch Ard and north of Loch Katrine
- Native Woodland Restoration and expansion throughout the area (avoiding peatland restoration areas) and
- Water and Wetland Restoration in combination with woodland expansion following Loch Achray to Loch Venachar, and Loch Ard to Gartmore, and Lake of Menteith and Loch Lomond.

#### NATURAL FLOOD MANAGEMENT

The SEPA Natural Flood Management Maps identify areas where nature-based solutions could be most effective for sustainable flood risk management, and these are to be further investigated in conjunction with the broad scale habitat recovery priority areas in our National Park Partnership Plan. Opportunities here are mostly related to run-off reduction, flood plain storage by Aberfoyle, and sediment management.

#### FARMING AND LAND USE

We are developing a Value of Farming and Land Use Study which will be a key source of evidence at park-wide and local level. Herbivore action planning and Regenerative Farming for Nature objectives will be key considerations.

Landownership in the area is a mix of large estates and smaller holdings under a variety of tenure options – owner occupier, tenancy, and contract farming.

The area is covered by three Deer Management Groups: Balquhider, East Loch Lomond and Flanders Moss.

#### LANDSCAPE SCALE RESTORATION PROJECTS

##### Future Nature

The Future Nature Strategy is an ambitious initiative aimed at halting and reversing the decline of nature within the National Park and emphasises the importance of restoring habitats and enhancing biodiversity to create a resilient, nature-rich environment. The strategy promotes sustainable land use practices that align with nature restoration and climate objectives.

Delivery in this area is focused on building capacity and supporting delivery in The Great Trossachs Forest. Covering 160 square km, this continuous area managed for the benefit of wildlife and people is creating a forest landscape large enough to include a range of habitats. It is this mosaic of habitats which invertebrates, mammals, birds and other wildlife need to thrive and to adapt to a changing climate.

##### Forth Climate Forest

The Forth Climate Forest covers the Stirling Council area and includes over 60% of the National Park. This landscape scale project focuses on communities, canopy cover, connectivity and climate. Aberfoyle to Milton from the A81 roundabout is included in the tree canopy cover analysis and mapping area of work. The woodland connectivity mapping shows this area as being a key area for woodland connectivity routes and targeted woodland creation.

#### SIGNIFICANT FORESTRY OPERATIONS OPPORTUNITIES

Scottish Water in partnership with long-term tenant Forestry and Land Scotland (FLS), are helping to create new woodlands at their Loch Katrine estate. Plans include the restoration and maintenance of several hundred hectares of peatland across the site, as well as the creation of over 4,600 hectares of native woodland, largely through rewilding and natural regeneration.

North and west beyond Loch Katrine, forestry is largely productive but well on in its restructuring journey. It is a very diverse forest in terms of age-classes, with improving diversity in species. Larch felling continues here but is much less disruptive than in other forests.

#### LOCAL PLACE PLANS AND RESTORING NATURE

Restoring Nature Actions within the Local Place Plans to be taken into consideration when preparing the New Local Development Plan include:

##### STRATHARD COMMUNITY LIFE PLANS

###### Kinlochard

- Enhance/preserve natural environment around Loch Ard and Loch Chon shores
- Conserve open spaces and woodland habitat around Kinlochard

###### Stronachlachar/Inversnaid

- Enhance natural environment around Loch Arklet and Loch Katrine shores

###### Port of Menteith

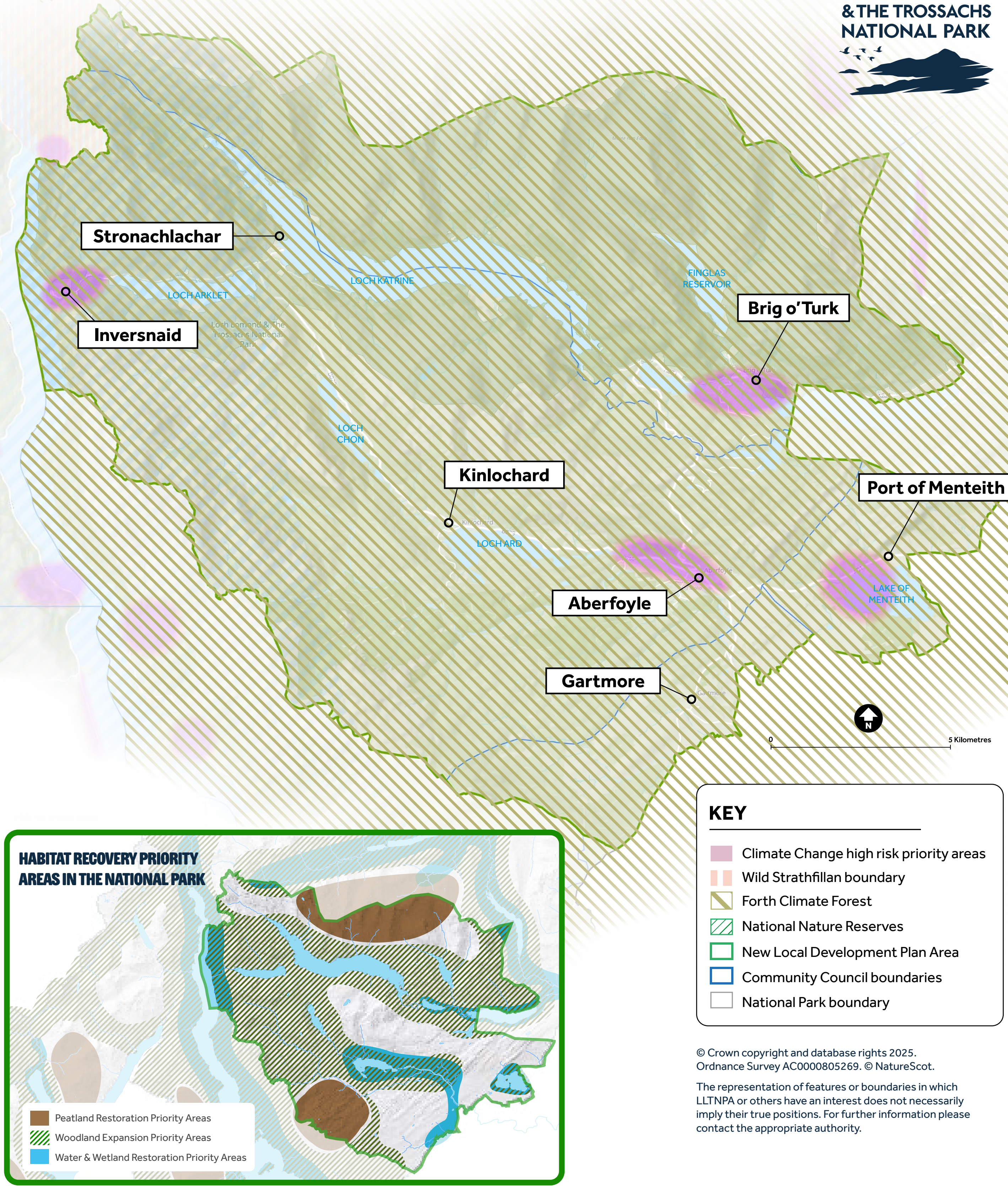
- Identify and eradicate invasive species

###### Trossachs Place Plan

- Retain open green space as mapped

### STRATHARD & THE TROSSACHS

## A NATURE POSITIVE PLACE | ISSUES & OPPORTUNITIES MAP



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# A CARBON NEGATIVE PLACE: UNDERSTANDING THE PLACE

National Planning Framework 4 (NPF4) is our national spatial strategy for Scotland. It sets out regional priorities for this theme as follows: *“The National Park will continue to support the quality of life and health of the urban population and its future priorities include new infrastructure provision to provide a quality visitor experience and support people to connect with nature, as well as a greener tourism sector supported by innovative low carbon transport solutions. Long distance active travel and rail routes have untapped potential to provide sustainable tourism solutions.”*

The National Park Partnership Plan aims to support improvement of travel infrastructure, making more of the National Park accessible to all. This will be achieved through the development of sustainable and active travel options, offering a diverse

range of travel choices and itineraries.

This is an introduction to the data and information (evidence) for A Carbon Negative Place outcomes to be used in developing the new Local Development Plan.

This is to be viewed alongside *A Carbon Negative Place: Issues and Opportunities*.

For more information on this theme, please go to the Topic Papers listed below:

- 3. Infrastructure First
- 4. Flooding, Water Management and, Blue and Green Infrastructure
- 6. Sustainable Transport
- 8. Living Well Locally
- 9. Cultural Heritage and Place
- 10. Rural Economy

## VISITOR INFRASTRUCTURE INVESTMENT PRIORITIES AND HUBS

The map shows the Infrastructure Investment Areas in the National Park Partnership Plan, for visitor experience and to provide wider benefits to communities and businesses.

The Priority Area of Strathard and The Trossachs stretches from Loch Lomond at Inversnaid in the west, through Strathard to Aberfoyle and across the Trossachs to Loch Venachar and Port of Menteith in the east. It contains the Primary Hub of Aberfoyle with links to the neighbouring Primary Hub of Callander. Infrastructure investment at key visitor hubs, such as Aberfoyle, can provide more sustainable ways for people to travel to, from and within the National Park through improved and joined up sustainable and active travel options.

## TRAVEL AND TRANSPORT

Transport and travel connections to and from the Aberfoyle Primary Hub are good, however within the broader Strathard and The Trossachs and beyond to other areas of the National Park, connections are often lacking.

### LONG DISTANCE PATH ROUTES

The map shows the main promoted long distance routes through this area:

- > The Great Trossachs Path
- > The Rob Roy Way
- > The West Highland Way
- > National Cycle Network NCN7
- > Gravelfoyle trails

Some sections of The National Cycle Network NCN7 have great potential for active travel use by commuters and communities.

### BIKE FACILITIES

- > Cycle parking is available in communities and at visitor sites.
- > There are open public bike repair stations in Aberfoyle and Gartmore.
- > There are e-bike Charging Facilities in Aberfoyle.
- > There is a Mountain Bike Skills Park in Aberfoyle.

### ROADS

The main A81, A821 and B829 roads pass through the area.

### WATER TRANSPORT

Water transport services run on Loch Katrine between Loch Katrine Pier and Stronachlachar and on Loch Lomond between Inversnaid and Tarbet

### PUBLIC BUS AND COACH SERVICES

There is a limited bus service here and no coach service. Demand-responsive transport (DRT) is not in operation in this area.

#### Bus services:

- > Strirling - Aberfoyle – Glasgow
- > Strathard community minibus

#### Pilot bus project “The Trossachs Explorer”

Aimed at reducing car reliance and emissions, the Trossachs Explorer operated between Callander and Aberfoyle in summer 2024. Strengths of the initiative included enhanced access to nature for non-drivers, reduced reliance on cars, and stronger community connections.



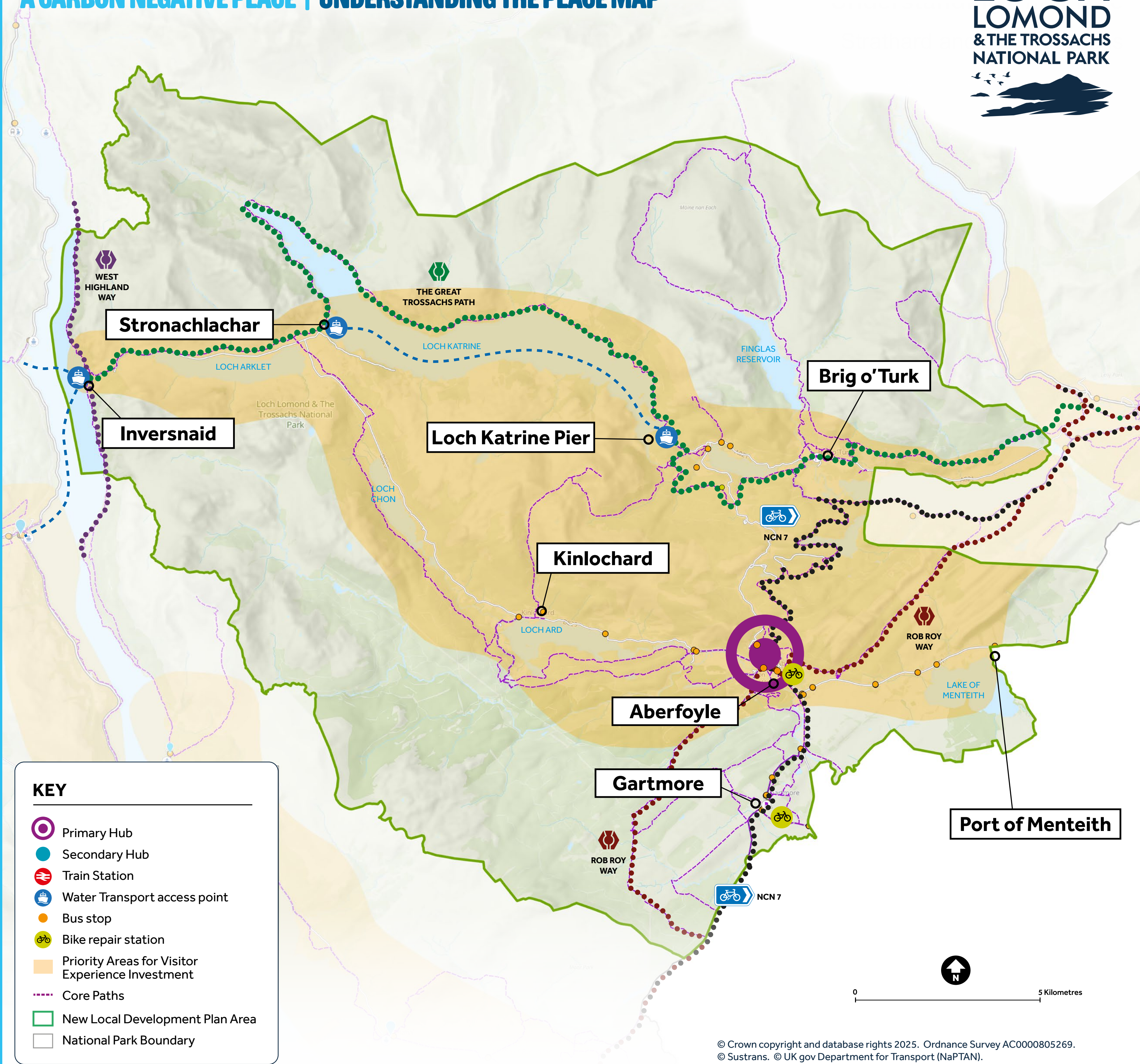
### AREA BASED PLANS AND STRATEGIES

In addition to the Topic Paper and Local Place Plan references, the following information is local to this area:

- > Strathard & The Trossachs Strategic Tourism Infrastructure Development Study (STID)
- > Strathard Framework
- > Stirling Council’s Sustainable Mobility Strategy [Draft]
- > Stirling Council Towns, Villages and Rural Areas Transport Plan 2017 – 2027

## STRATHARD & THE TROSSACHS

### A CARBON NEGATIVE PLACE | UNDERSTANDING THE PLACE MAP



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# A CARBON NEGATIVE PLACE: ISSUES AND OPPORTUNITIES

This is an introduction to the data and information (evidence) for A Carbon Negative Place outcomes to be used in developing the new Local Development Plan. This is to be viewed alongside *A Carbon Negative Place: Understanding the Place*.

## ISSUES

### TRAFFIC

79% of visitors arrive in the National Park by car and 73% explore the area by car according to our 2019/20 Visitor Survey. An update to this evidence will be available in the coming months.

If there is no intervention, car-based travel is predicted to increase nationally by 40% by 2037. The resultant congestion and environmental impact of car travel in the National Park has an impact on communities and visitors. In the area the main roads are the A81, and the A821. The A821 includes Duke's Pass, a popular driving route giving access to the Three Loch Forest Drive along quiet forest roads.

**VISITOR PRESSURE AND CONGESTION HOTSPOTS**

Owing to visitor pressures affecting communities, businesses and visitors here, the National Park Authority identified this area for a Strategic Tourism Infrastructure Study (STID). Visitor pressures in terms of vehicles and behaviours are experienced in communities and visitor sites across the area including the B829 road to Stronachlachar/Inversnaid, the A821 at Loch Achray, and various access points to popular lochs, forests and hiking routes including Ben A'an and Ben Venue.

**SAFE COMMUNITY ACTIVE TRAVEL AND LOCAL LIVING**

The National Cycle Route 7, running through the area, is popular with cyclists.

The rural nature of the area creates challenges in living well locally, both in terms of path networks and in interconnectivity of public transport for the local population.

## OPPORTUNITIES

### INFRASTRUCTURE AND SERVICES INVESTMENT

A more coordinated, connected and better designed, and managed network of visitor sites could assist rural visitor locations, local authorities, and communities to make improvements to cope with increased visitor pressure, offer enhanced visitor experiences and promote responsible tourism (land and water based), with low-carbon and nature-conscious approaches. This could reduce the impact of climate change and make it easier to manage visitor pressures, reducing the need for enforcement action.

Investment in Priority Areas and Hubs is to be delivered through the Place Programme and the Mobility Partnership.

The National Park Place Programme is a place-based multi-year programme for prioritised capital investment in visitor management infrastructure. National Park partners are working with each other, and with local and national stakeholders, to develop this programme.

The National Park Mobility Partnership Programme is designed to secure the investment, expertise and resources needed to deliver an efficient, inclusive, and lower-carbon transport system across the National Park, contributing to the overall vision of a thriving, nature-positive, and carbon negative National Park.

- Opportunities for Infrastructure and Services Investment include:
- Infrastructure improvements at Place Programme agreed sites including Aberfoyle, and wider- Strathard and Trossachs priorities.
  - Blue and green infrastructure improvements across all site infrastructure, active travel and transport developments to benefit biodiversity.
  - Maximising the potential of long-distance routes.
  - Sustainable transport strategy connecting the hubs of Aberfoyle and Callander and beyond.
  - Investing in new active travel routes and creating a new mobility hub at Aberfoyle.
  - Active travel connections and improvements between Aberfoyle, nearby villages, and visitor destinations, including the A821 and B829.

### LOCAL DELIVERY PARTNERSHIPS

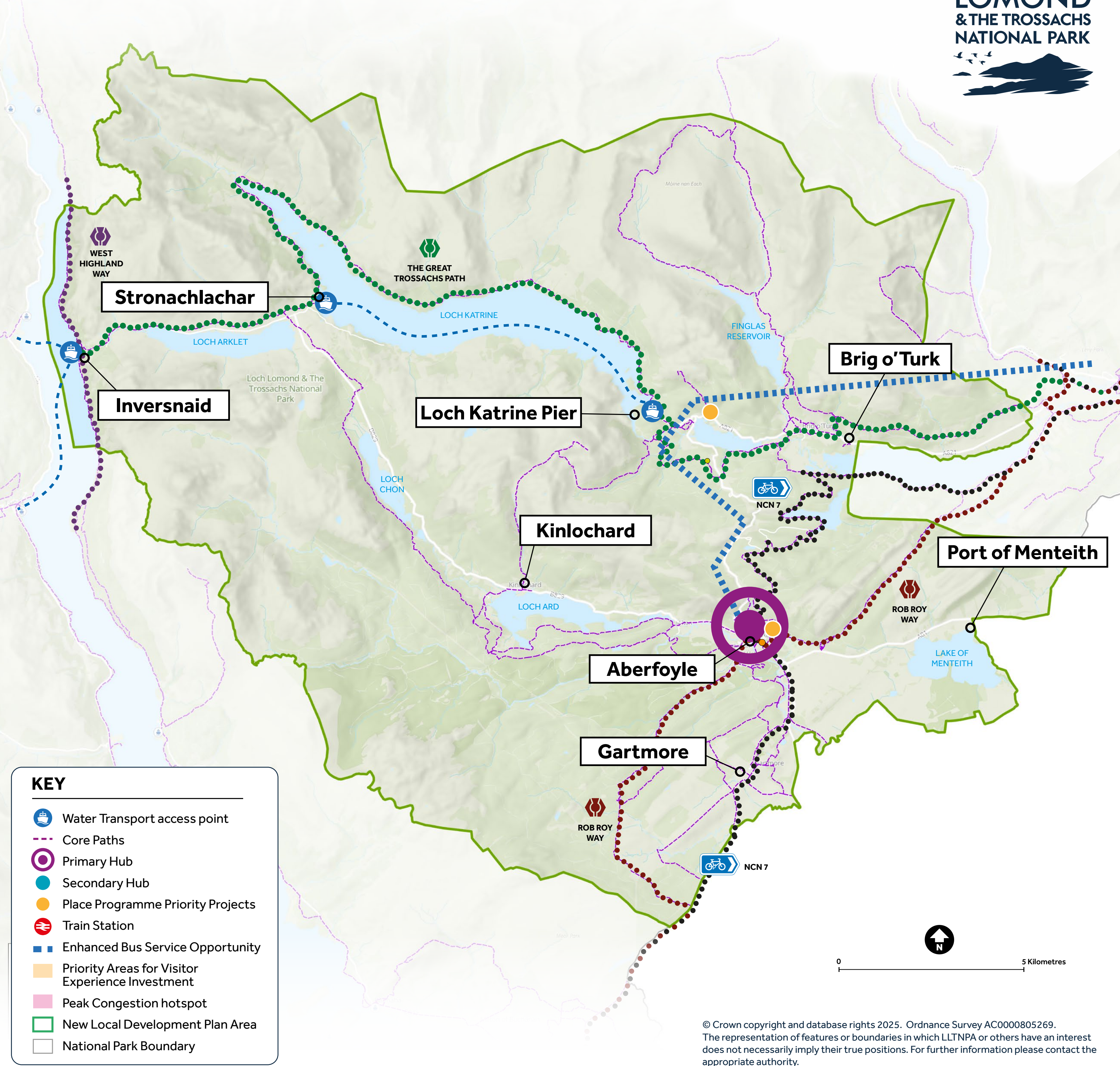
- Strathard Framework Steering Group, made up of representatives from the Strathard Community Council, Strathard Community Trust, Stirling Council and the National Park Authority.
- Strathard & The Trossachs Visitor Management Group is in place here to support collaborative multi stakeholder safe management of tourism impacts.

### LOCAL PLACE PLANS AND CREATING A LOW CARBON PLACE

- Creating a Low Carbon Place Actions within the Local Place Plans to date to be taken into consideration when preparing the New Local Development Plan include:
- Strathard Community Life Plans (CLP) Kinlochard; Stronachlachar/Inversnaid**
- Paths for walkers/cyclists and signage locations on map
  - Bus shelter location in Aberfoyle
  - Improve Aberfoyle bike park and bike trails
  - Increase mountain bike trails
- Port of Menteith Place Plan (not yet registered)**
- Develop the village hall area into a Mobility Hub
  - Improve visitor facilities at village hall for motor homes
  - Improve path networks and safe cycling routes
- Trossachs Place Plan**
- Improving path networks.
  - integrated public transport system linking to services in Stirling and Aberfoyle
  - Improved management of traffic and parking provision
  - Explore camping needs
  - Improve visitor signage/interpretation
- Gartmore Place Plan**
- Improving path networks.
  - Electric vehicle charging in village square

## STRATHARD & THE TROSSACHS

### A CARBON NEGATIVE PLACE | ISSUES AND OPPORTUNITIES MAP



# A THRIVING PLACE: COMMUNITY AND LOCAL LIVING

National Planning Framework 4 (NPF4) is our national spatial strategy for Scotland. It sets out regional priorities for this theme as follows:  
“The area’s communities can adapt to support more localised living and working opportunities, with improved digital connectivity and affordable housing. More integrated planning and land management offers opportunities to support land use change and reduction of greenhouse gas emissions. The approach also links with and relates to the action area to the north.”

This is an introduction to the data and information (evidence) for *A Thriving Place: community and local living* outcomes to be used in developing the new Local Development Plan.

- This is to be viewed alongside *A Thriving Place: greener economy and investing*. For more information on this theme, please go to the Topic Papers listed below:
2. Biodiversity, Natural Places, and Forestry, Woodland and Trees

3. Infrastructure First

4. Flooding, Water Management and, Blue and Green Infrastructure

5. Energy and Heat and Cooling

6. Sustainable Transport

7. Housing

8. Living Well Locally

9. Cultural Heritage and Place

10. Rural Economy
- The Play Sufficiency Assessment also provides more information.

## LIVING WELL LOCALLY

The map shows the town and village communities within this area with their local living facilities. This information can be built on to develop strategies for planning for ‘Living Well Locally’; an approach similar to 20-minute neighbourhoods but for the rural context.

### ABERFOYLE

Aberfoyle is the main hub for this area and provides a number of services for living well locally. A greater range of services are accessed in Callander, Balforn or Stirling. Public transport links are limited, with a bus service connecting Aberfoyle to Balforn, Stirling and Glasgow. There is no service to Callander.

### GARTMORE

Gartmore offers a small number of living locally services including a primary school and a community hall and pub. A greater range of services are accessed in Drymen, Aberfoyle, Callander and Stirling. There are no public transport links connecting Gartmore.

### BRIG O’TURK

Brig O’Turk offers a small number of living locally services including a community hall and a café. However, it lacks the essential services, including a shop, meaning residents need to travel to Aberfoyle, Callander and Stirling. There are no public transport links connecting Brig O’Turk.

### PORT OF MENTEITH

Port of Menteith offers a small number of living locally services including a primary school, community hall and a restaurant. However, it lacks the essential services, including a shop, meaning residents need to travel to Aberfoyle, Callander and Stirling. Public transport links are limited, with a bus service connecting Port of Menteith to Aberfoyle, Balforn, Stirling and Glasgow. There is no service to Callander.

## COMMUNITY WEALTH BUILDING – COMMUNITY FACILITIES

Community wealth building is a specific policy within NPF4 (Policy 25) which aims to ensure that local economic development focuses on community and place benefits as a central and primary consideration with reference to supporting community ownership and management of buildings and land. Its policy intent is to encourage and promote a new strategic approach to economic development that provides a practical model for building a wellbeing economy at local, regional and national level. Community-run services are not covered in this profile.

Community assets here include village halls in Kinlochard, Port of Menteith, Gartmore and Aberfoyle; Strathard Business Hub in Aberfoyle, Aberfoyle Bike Park, Trossachs Area Services (fuel and shop), Community Pub in Gartmore, and the Old School and Hall in Brig O’Turk.

## HISTORIC ENVIRONMENT

### GARDENS AND DESIGNED LANDSCAPES

The Inventory of Gardens and Designed Landscapes sites in this area are Inchmahome and Rednock. Other historic designed landscapes include: Gartmore, Shannochill, and Duchray Castle.

### BUILDINGS AT RISK REGISTER

Historic Environment Scotland (HES) prepared a summary report on the 2022 Buildings at Risk Register (BARR) survey conducted in the National Park. In this area there are a number of identified buildings at risk including The Royal Cottage Jetty on Loch Katrine, Woodlands House at Loch Achray and Kirkton Cottage in Aberfoyle.

## AREA BASED PLANS AND STRATEGIES

- In addition to the Topic Paper references, the following information is local to this area:
- Strathard Framework

➤ Strathard and the Trossachs STID

➤ Local Place Plan Profile and Data Packs

➤ Stirling Council’s Sustainable Mobility Strategy [Draft]

➤ Stirling Council Towns, Villages and Rural Areas Transport Plan 2017 – 2027

## LOCAL PLACE PLANS AND A THRIVING PLACE

A Thriving Place Actions within the Local Place Plans to date to be taken into consideration when preparing the New Local Development Plan include:

### STRATHARD COMMUNITY LIFE PLANS (CLP): KINLOCHARD; STRONACHLACHAR/INVERNSNAID

- Economic opportunities and significant community value associated with Kinlochard Village Hall
- Housing near Glen Dhub, Stronachlachar and Inversnaid
- Economic development zoning
- Play park improvements in Aberfoyle

### PORT OF MENTEITH PLACE PLAN (NOT YET REGISTERED)

- Improving access to open space, play and recreation
- Exploring community ownership of Church Glebe
- Affordable small-scale housing

### TROSSACHS PLACE PLAN

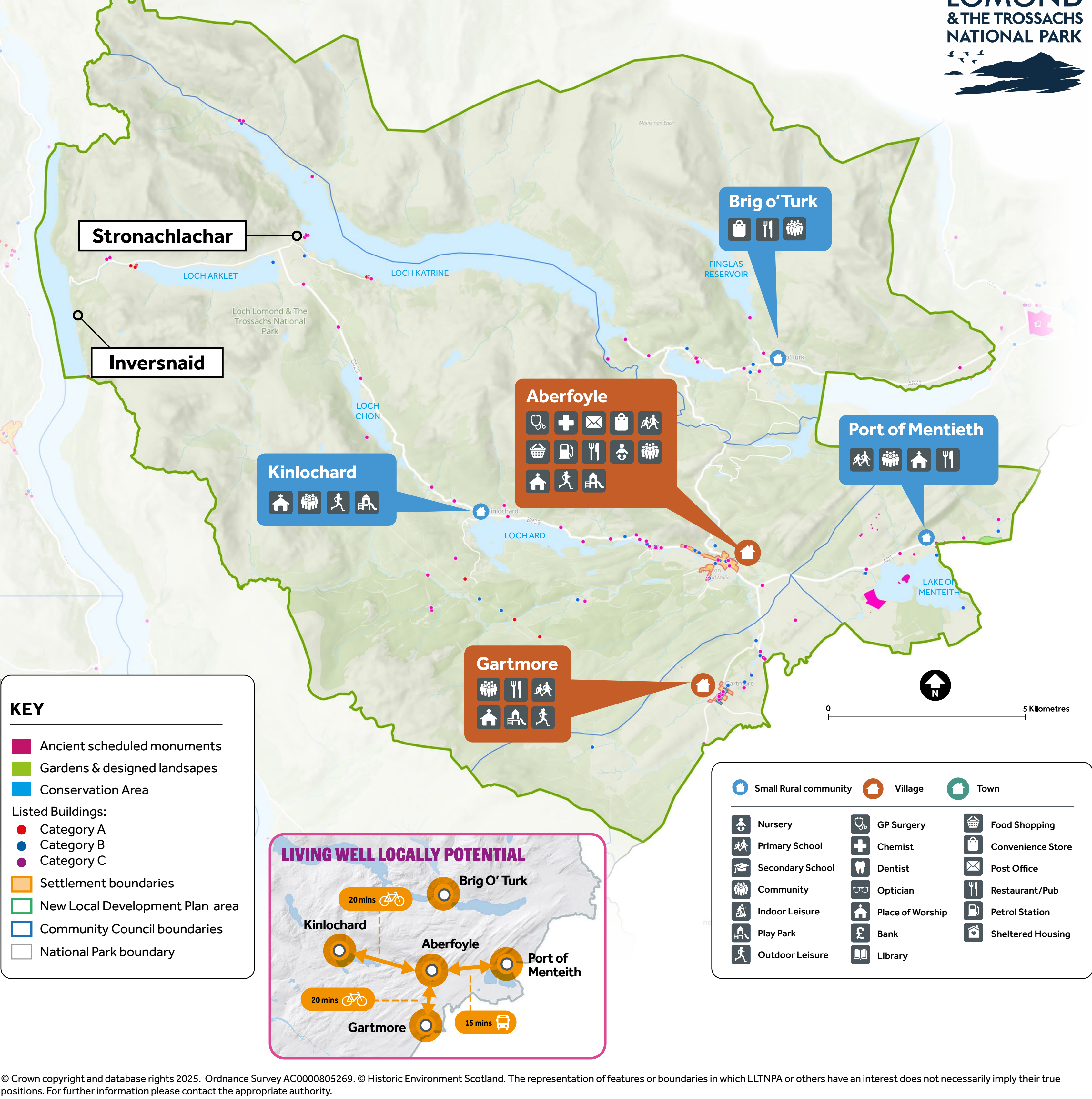
- Considering best use of assets - Village Hall, Old School
- New small scale housing potential.

### GARTMORE PLACE PLAN

- Focus on improving recreation facilities
- Potential of a business hub in the village hall.

## STRATHARD & THE TROSSACHS

### A THRIVING PLACE | COMMUNITY AND LOCAL LIVING MAP



**This is an introduction to the data and information (evidence) for *A Thriving Place*: greener economy and investing outcomes to be used in developing the new Local Development Plan. This is to be viewed alongside *A Thriving Place*: community and local living.**

## STRATEGIC DEVELOPMENT

This map highlights the key areas in the National Park for strategic development priorities, planned infrastructure improvements and core infrastructure. Through its planning role the National Park Authority can proactively guide new development and infrastructure within the National Park that is more closely aligned to deliver for climate and nature, while also meeting the needs of those living and working here. Nature recovery can be secured through identifying opportunities for investment in natural capital, strengthening nature networks and enhancing biodiversity on site as part of development delivery.

## RURAL ECONOMY

The goal is for new development and infrastructure to be more responsive to the needs of communities, the rural economy, land use and management, directly benefiting people, climate and nature. The local economy is supported by tourism and small businesses, with community-led projects aiming to improve local services and infrastructure. Tourism sites attract a large number of visitors annually, which benefits the area.

## HOUSING

The Housing Authority in this area is Stirling Council.

As a Planning Authority, we play an active role in supporting the delivery of rural housing within the National Park through our Local Development Plan (LDP). Monitoring shows significant challenges to delivering affordable and sustainable housing:

- › constraints on land supply and suitable development sites
- › a lack of infrastructure and essential services
- › high development costs
- › high property prices driven by external pressures

Ownership dominates the housing market, creating affordability challenges for lower-income households. The private rented sector is limited and often unaffordable, while social housing availability is low, with high demand and long waiting lists.

In this area demand for affordable housing is high, particularly in Aberfoyle.

## NATURE TOURISM SITES

## Woodland Trust Glen Finglas Visitor Gateway

Part of The Great Trossachs Forest, this estate offers a visitor centre and multiple trails, including a family-friendly play trail with activity centres and immersive artworks.

## The Lodge Forest Visitor Centre

Providing gateway access to Queen Elizabeth Forest Park, the Lodge near Aberfoyle features several signposted trails, a red squirrel hide, and live wildlife camera feeds.

**RSPB Inversnaid**

A nature reserve located on the eastern shore of Loch Lomond in Scotland. Managed by RSPB, there is a small visitor centre and a reserve spanning over 800 hectares.

## SUPPORTING JOBS AND SKILLS

The economy in the National Park is dominated by the accommodation, hospitality and retail sector, however land-based employment, construction and public service employment (care, education) also makes up a big part of the economy. The primary employment hub here is identified as Aberfoyle.

## DIGITAL INFRASTRUCTURE AND CONNECTIVITY

The predominantly rural nature of the area poses issues with broadband access. Data shows that there are large areas that have limited access or are unable to access broadband however most are not where people live. A high proportion of the villages and towns where people live receive superfast broadband including Aberfoyle and Gartmore.

The areas that have limited mobile network coverage include Kinlochard and large areas of the Trossachs including Stronachlachar and Brig O'Turk.

## VACANT AND DERELICT AND UNDERDEVELOPED LAND

There are no sites identified within this area.

## DEVELOPMENT ACTIVITY • PLANNING APPLICATIONS

The recent development activity this area is experiencing is focused on housing, tourism and retail.

The Strathard Framework sits alongside our Local Development Plan as planning guidance but it is also a holistic document which is hoped to be used to influence land use decisions, including large-scale conservation projects and also strategically guide visitor management and public realm work.

Listed below are the most significant planning applications for the area in recent years to indicate the development activity to help illustrate how planning policies are used.

**00/00221/REM/S:** Ledard Farm, Kinlochard – Erection of 24 Houses. Approved in 2000 and consent remains live, but no construction works undertaken to date.

**2019/0305/DET:** Stronachlachar Cottage, Stronachlachar - Change of use and extension of existing building to dwellinghouse and erection of 6 houses. Approved 2021

**2022/0181:** Former Co-op, Main Street, Aberfoyle - Alterations to existing retail unit to sub divide into 3 units (retail, cafe and office). Approved

**2022/0213:** Duchray Road, Aberfoyle - Erection of 7 no. holiday let units. Approved.

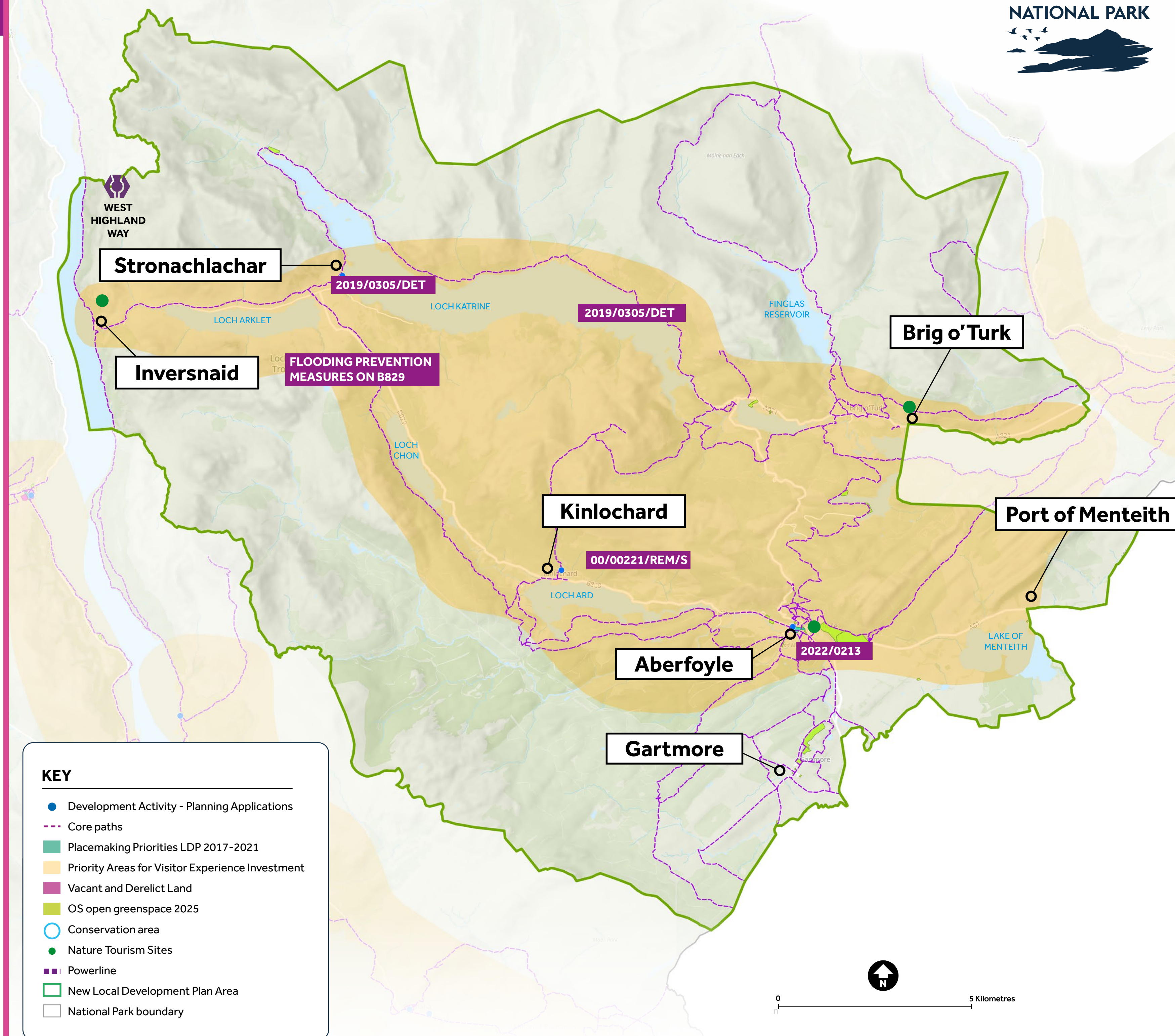
Stirling Council Flooding are raising objections to pre-applications/applications for development where access is to be taken along roads that are subject to flood risk - this includes the B829 Aberfoyle-Inversnaid.

### Wind farm development activity southwest of Strathard and The Trossachs

Vale of Leven wind farm: 10  
Turbines, maximum height  
of 250m new submitted  
information reduction to 220m  
Still to be determined by Scottish  
Government Energy Consents  
Unit



## A THRIVING PLACE | GREENER ECONOMY AND INVESTING



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