

EAST LOCH LOMOND | 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 EAST LOCH LOMOND



DEFINING THE PLACE

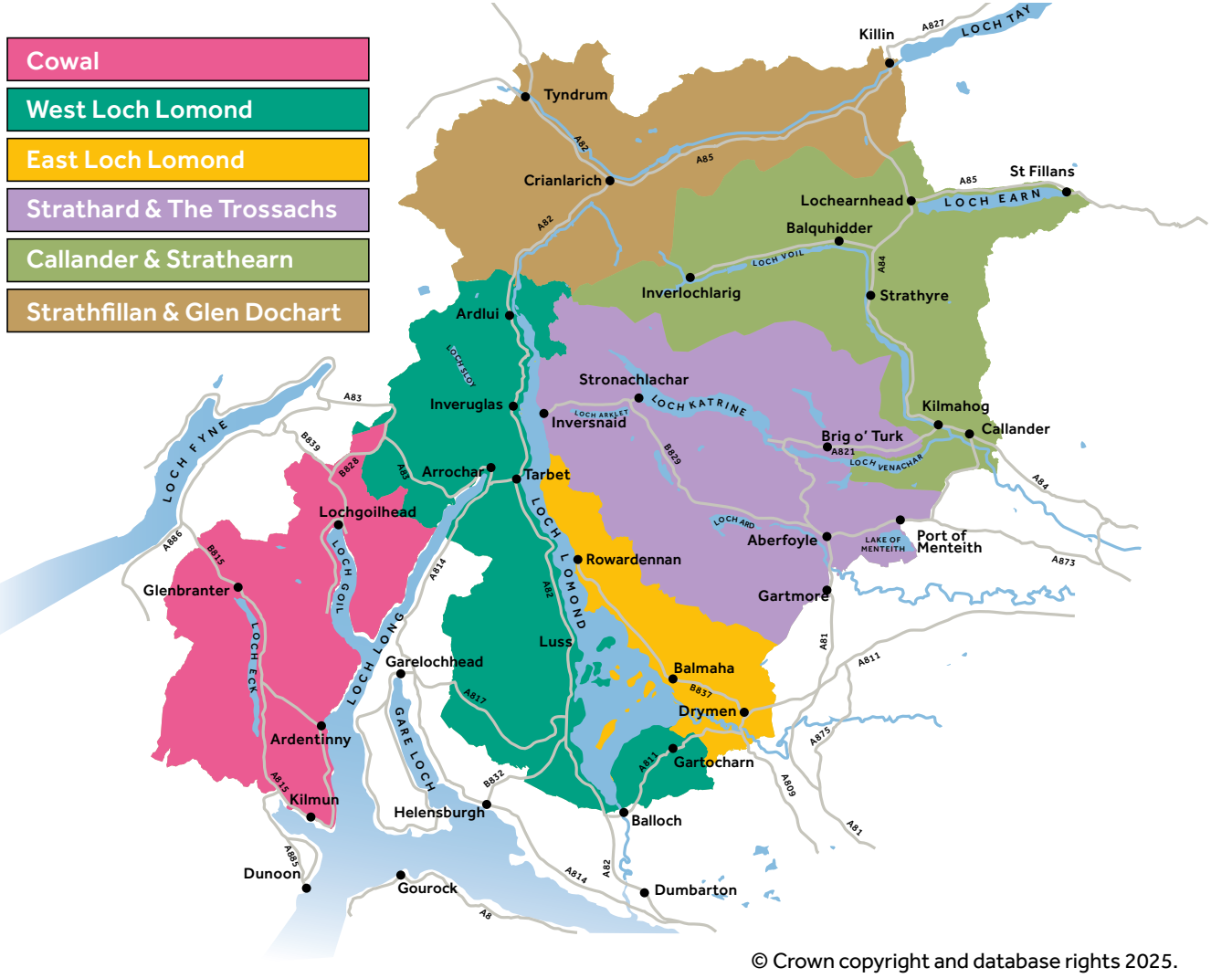
This area extends from the south eastern boundary of the National Park at Croftamie to the north up the east side of Loch Lomond taking in Drymen, Balmaha and Rowardennan, as well as the eastern islands on the loch including Inchcailloch, and Conic Hill and Ben Lomond.

Community Council wards

- Buchanan
- Croftamie
- Drymen, to the extent of the National Park boundary
- Kilmarnock, to the edge of Gartocharn

Local Authorities

- Stirling Council
- West Dunbartonshire Council



A PICTURE OF THE PLACE

East Loch Lomond, rich in nature and history, is home to several of the National Park’s best loved sites and Loch Lomond National Nature Reserve.

The popular long distance trail, the West Highland Way passes through this stretch of the National Park, on its way from Milngavie to Fort William taking in Conic Hill and many miles of the lochside. The geological feature of the Highland Boundary Fault line crosses this area, separating the highlands from the lowlands, which can be clearly seen from the hills and viewpoints.

Wildlife is abundant here with white tailed eagles, ospreys and more recently the reintroduction of beavers. RSPB Loch Lomond outside Gartocharn sits within the East Loch Lomond area.

The historic island of Inchcailloch is part of the Loch Lomond National Nature Reserve. Ben Lomond, Conic Hill, Cashel Forest, Milarrochy Bay and Sallochy provide a wide range of recreation opportunities including hiking, camping, swimming and paddleboarding. It is an area of farming and hospitality businesses.

The village of Drymen is one of the National Park’s largest settlements with many local services including the local primary school.

The area experiences a high volume of visitors, particularly in peak summer months and in good weather, creating pressures such as irresponsible parking and road closures at times.

Limited public transport options are available with a bus service from Balloch and no direct buses to Stirling.



PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT IN WEST LOCH LOMOND



NATIONAL STRATEGIC INFRASTRUCTURE IDENTIFIED IN NATIONAL PLANNING FRAMEWORK 4

East Loch Lomond is home to National Infrastructure as shown in National Park Partnership Plan: electricity transmission lines.

NATIONAL PARK PARTNERSHIP PLAN DELIVERY TO BE CONSIDERED

This plan highlights the successful pilot project in Drymen, which explored with the community how people can live more locally, linking with surrounding communities. The findings of this are summarised in *‘Drymen and the villages of East Loch Lomond: Living Well Locally Vision and Routemap’* and were used by the community to inform their Local Place Plan.

DEVELOPMENT ACTIVITY - PLANNING APPLICATIONS

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

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

KILMARONOCK PLACE PLAN 2024-34

The community wants to create a welcoming and inclusive, safe and affordable place for people of all ages and backgrounds to live, work, bring up their children and grow old, with accessible services and a mutually supportive environment progressing towards a just transition to Net Zero. They face challenges of an aging population and changes to the traditional agricultural economy, and it is hard for people to secure homes to stay here. The climate emergency is an underpinning consideration. Priorities include:

- Improve housing availability for all ages.
- Support Living Well Locally by improving connectivity through quality footpaths, active travel and public transport.
- Adapt to and mitigate climate change by improving management of natural open spaces, natural resources and flooding.



EAST LOCH LOMOND PLACE PLAN (IN DEVELOPMENT)

This Local Place Plan is being developed, and it will inform the new Local Development Plan. It will be considered alongside the East Loch Lomond Strategic Tourism Infrastructure Development Framework.



CROFTAMIE PLACE PLAN (IN DEVELOPMENT)

This Local Place Plan is being developed, and it will inform the new Local Development Plan. It will be considered alongside the East Loch Lomond Strategic Tourism Infrastructure Development Framework.



DRYMEN PLACE PLAN, TO THE EXTENT OF THE NATIONAL PARK BOUNDARY

As a local-living hub, connectivity between Drymen and nearby villages is a priority to meet residents’ and businesses’ needs and reduce reliance on private cars. Challenges of speeding traffic and public transport must be addressed, especially with the large housing site set to be developed. The priority over the next decade is to secure funding to progress community priorities including:

- Improving connectivity through public transport, active travel and paths.
- Protecting village services and developing public toilets and recycling/recharging facilities.
- Improving recreation facilities and green spaces.



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.

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 Green Infrastructure.**

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

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** - a 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 East Loch Lomond and its Special Qualities are important.

LANDSCAPE CHARACTER

The Landscape Character of the area south to north along Loch Lomond is ‘Lowland Loch Basin/Lowland Loch Basin Islands’, and as the loch narrows from Rowardennan, ‘Straths and Glens with Lochs’. Further east of the loch and shore at the south, extending through Drymen to Balmaha is ‘River Valley Farmland and Estates’, flanked by ‘Plateau Moorland and Forest’ and, north of Balmaha, ‘Highland Summits’.

SPECIAL LANDSCAPE QUALITIES

Special qualities of the landscape in East Loch Lomond include:

- Loch Lomond**
- › Immensity of loch and landscape
- › Two lochs in one
- › A multitude of beautiful islands
- › Distinctive mountain groups
- › Ben Lomond, widely known, popularly frequented
- › Banks of broadleaved woodland
- › Peaceful side glens

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. The area is home to the National Nature Reserve Loch Lomond, the RAMSAR Wetlands of International Importance Loch Lomond, the Loch Lomond Woods and the Endrick Water Special Area of Conservation, alongside the SSSI sites for both. SSSIs are also at Ben Lomond and Conic Hill, with Geological Conservation Review sites at the south of Loch, and along the Endrick and Gartness.

Landscape designations include the Loch Lomond National Scenic Area (NSA), and Ben Lomond National Memorial Landscape.

PRIORITY SPECIES

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.

Loch Lomond National Nature Reserve is the site of the licensed beaver releases at RSPB Loch Lomond, the third beaver translocation site in Scotland. An ongoing NatureScot survey will provide a clearer picture of beaver distribution in the coming months.

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 areas for peatland restoration identified at Ben Lomond and Cashel 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 Atlantic Oak Woodland, Queen Elizabeth Forest Park, and other areas of native woodland and commercial forestry, which have great potential to store even greater volumes of greenhouse gases and act as carbon sinks.

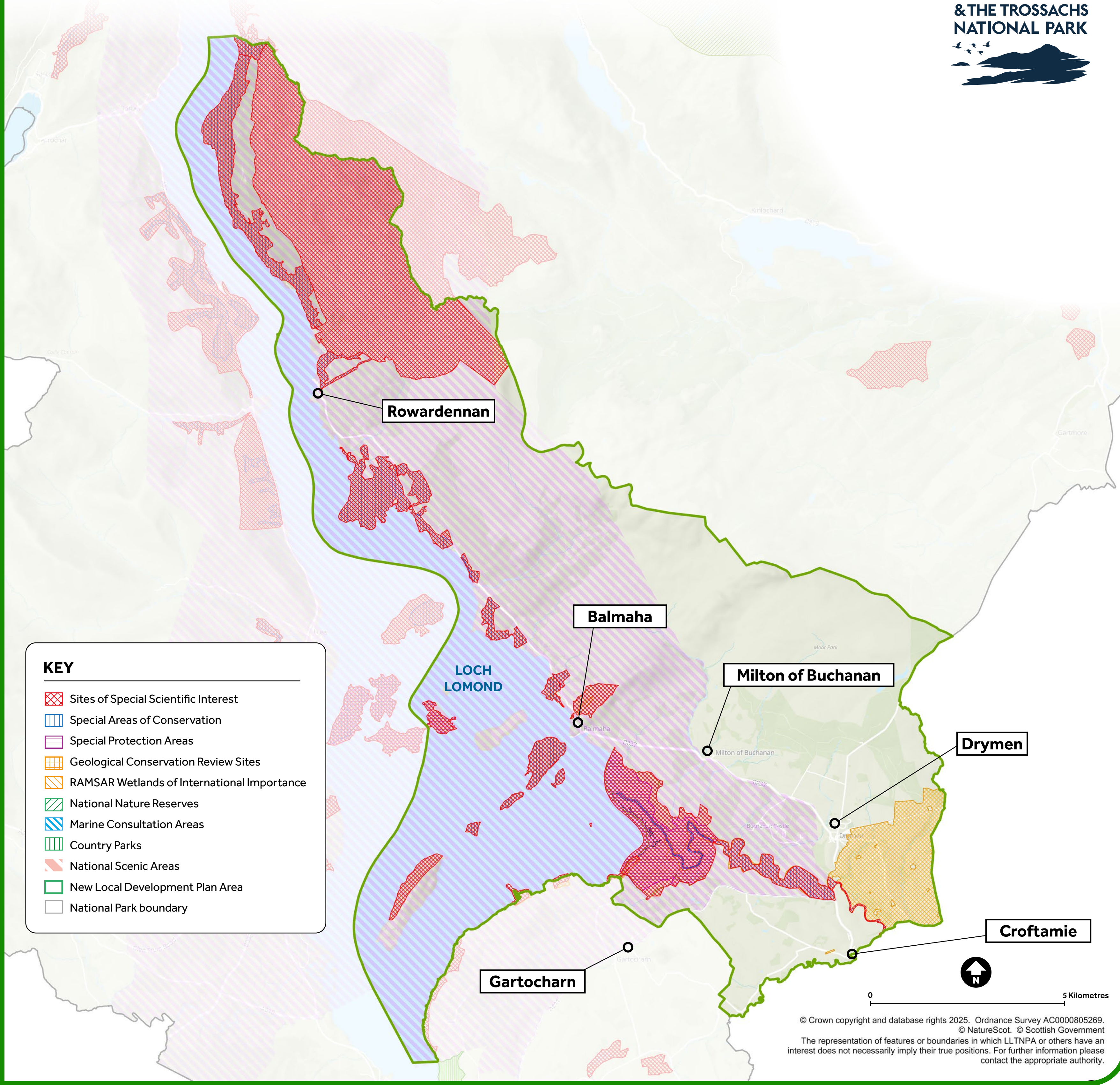
AREA BASED PLANS AND STRATEGIES

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

EAST LOCH LOMOND

A NATURE POSITIVE PLACE | UNDERSTANDING THE PLACE MAP



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:

- **Drymen** – high risk area for storms and wildfires on surrounding hills.
- **Balmaha** – high risk area for storms and wildfires on surrounding hills.
- **Salloch** – flood risk, increased precipitation and storms.
- **Rowardennan** – Reduced water availability/drought, increasing temperature and/or extreme temperature events, storms and wildfire.

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

Areas vulnerable to flooding

The Local Plan District is Clyde and Loch Lomond, 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 East Loch Lomond are vulnerable to surface water flooding, with Balmaha also vulnerable to river flooding. There are no community based Potentially Vulnerable Areas (2024), these 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.

INVASIVE NON-NATIVE SPECIES (INNS)

Invasive non-native species are a pressure here; the land, the islands and the mouth of the Endrick Water. This includes riparian species, rhododendron, and grey squirrels. Accessibility issues to the islands affect INNS management.

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 Priority Actions Zone (where actions will have the greatest impact on controlling spread). The need to fell larch trees infected with Phytophthora ramorum and reduce the risk of further spread is driving significant forest restructuring in the area.

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

Examples of key pressures include outbreaks of blue green algae in loch bathing areas, and INNS at the mouth of the Endrick Water.

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

The 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 between the Rowardennan and Loch Ard Forests,
- Native Woodland Restoration and expansion throughout the area (avoiding peatland restoration areas) and
- Water and Wetland Restoration in combination with woodland expansion following the shore of Loch Lomond and the Endrick Water.

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 include Endrick Water flood plain storage and, more widely, run-off reduction 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 two deer management groups: East Loch Lomond and Loch Lomond Islands.

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. It promotes sustainable land use practices that align with nature restoration and climate objectives.

Delivery in this area is focused on the Loch Lomond Basin, including the developing rainforest project within the Atlantic Rainforest Zone. This project, in collaboration with the Alliance for Scotland's Rainforest, includes:

- Removing rhododendron and establishing the right level of herbivore grazing to support the woodland to regenerate naturally.
- Tree planting to expand the rainforest.

Forth Climate Forest

The Forth Climate Forest covers the Stirling Council area and includes over 60% of the Loch Lomond & the Trossachs National Park. This landscape scale project focuses on communities, canopy cover, connectivity and climate. Drymen is included in the tree canopy cover analysis and mapping area of work.

SIGNIFICANT FORESTRY OPERATIONS OPPORTUNITIES

In this area the 450 hectare Ptarmigan Forest will see around half of its trees removed in a controlled programme of felling over 10 years. The entirety of the Forestry and Land Scotland managed forest estate on the east side of Loch Lomond, which lies in the Ben Lomond National Memorial Landscape, is being converted to native broadleaf woodland thereby restoring rainforest habitat. It will be restocked with largely native broadleaves by planting, and natural regeneration may also be used. The regeneration of Sitka spruce remains a threat, even after clear-felling, to the establishment of rainforest.

LOCAL PLACE PLANS AND RESTORING NATURE

Restoring Nature Actions emerging from Local Place Plans in the development period, will be taken into consideration when preparing the new Local Development Plan.

Drymen Place Plan 2023, to the extent of the National Park boundary

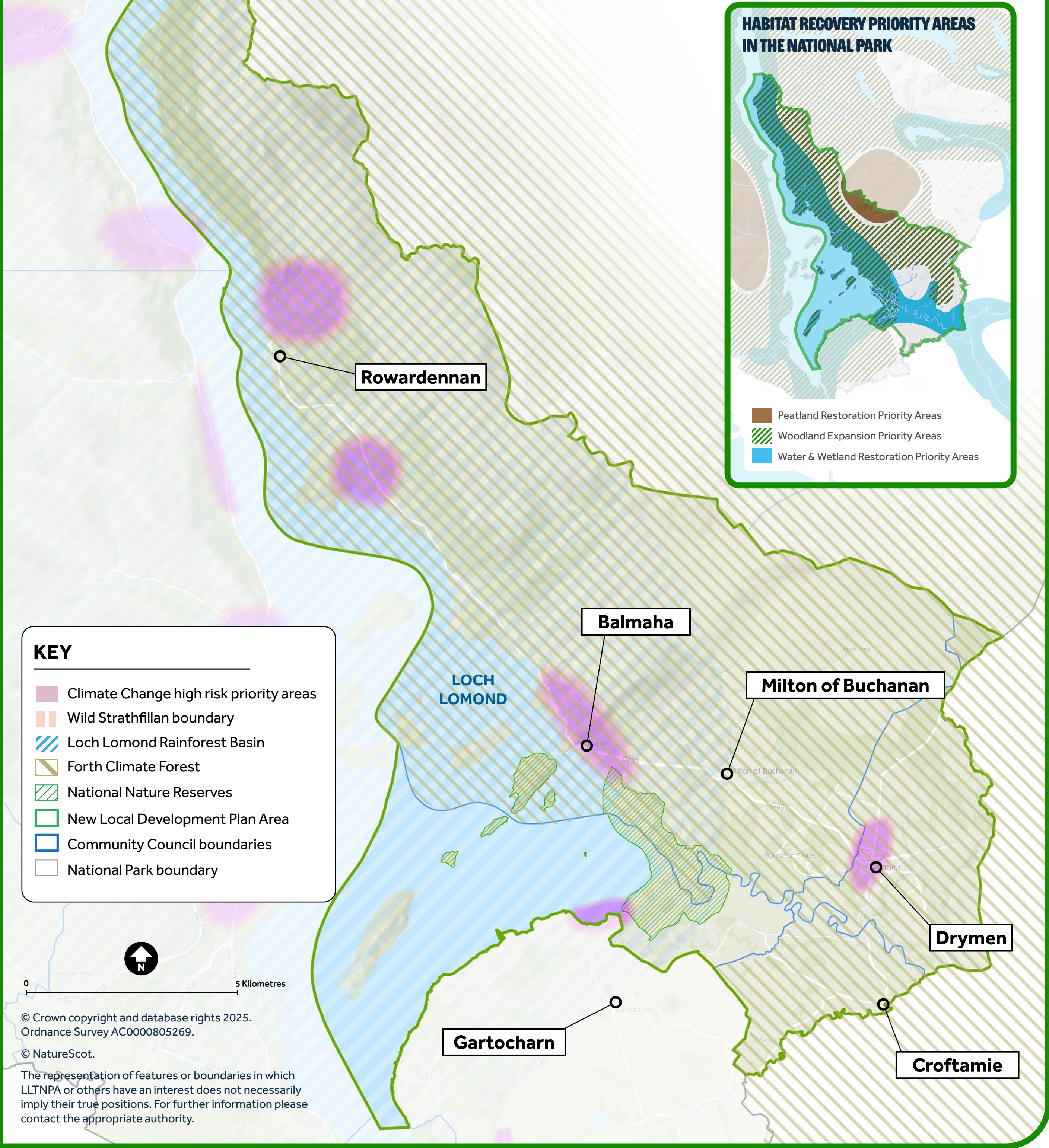
- Improving biodiversity by undertaking nature initiatives within the village.
- Encourage climate and nature positive land use changes.

Kilmarnock Local Place Plan 2024 –2034

- Control invasive non-native species and extend understanding of local biodiversity.
- Investigate potential increase of designated areas e.g. expansion to include River Endrick tributaries.

EAST LOCH LOMOND

A NATURE POSITIVE PLACE | ISSUES & OPPORTUNITIES MAP



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 here stretches from Drymen north-westward along the Loch to Rowardennan at the foot of Ben Lomond. It contains the Primary Hub of East Loch Lomond (Drymen together with Balmaha) and the Secondary Hub of Rowardennan. Infrastructure investment at key visitor hubs, such as Drymen and Balmaha 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 East Loch Lomond Primary Hub of Drymen/Balmaha are on rural roads, and there is currently no public transport beyond Balmaha, with most visitors arriving by car via the A82 from Glasgow. Limited public transport options are available throughout this area.

LONG DISTANCE PATH ROUTES

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

- The West Highland Way
- The Rob Roy Way
- The John Muir Way
- National Cycle Network NCN7

Access to the National Cycle Network offers great potential for active travel use in some sections by commuters and communities. Drymen is a hub for facilities for all routes.

BIKE FACILITIES

- Cycle parking is available in communities and at visitor sites.
- Drymen Village sustainable travel hub provides a public bike repair station and an e-bike charging facility in the village square.

ROADS

The main A811 road passes through Drymen, with Balmaha reached along the B837. Beyond Balmaha access is along the narrow C6 road.

PUBLIC BUS, COACH AND RAIL SERVICES

In East Loch Lomond, the bus services available are:

- Balloch to Drymen
- Croftamie to Drymen (Stirling Council Demand Responsive Transport - DRT)

WATER TRANSPORT SERVICES

Water transport services on Loch Lomond between:

- Luss and Balmaha,
- Tarbet, Luss, Inversnaid, Balmaha and Rowardennan, and
- Balmaha and Inchcailloch.

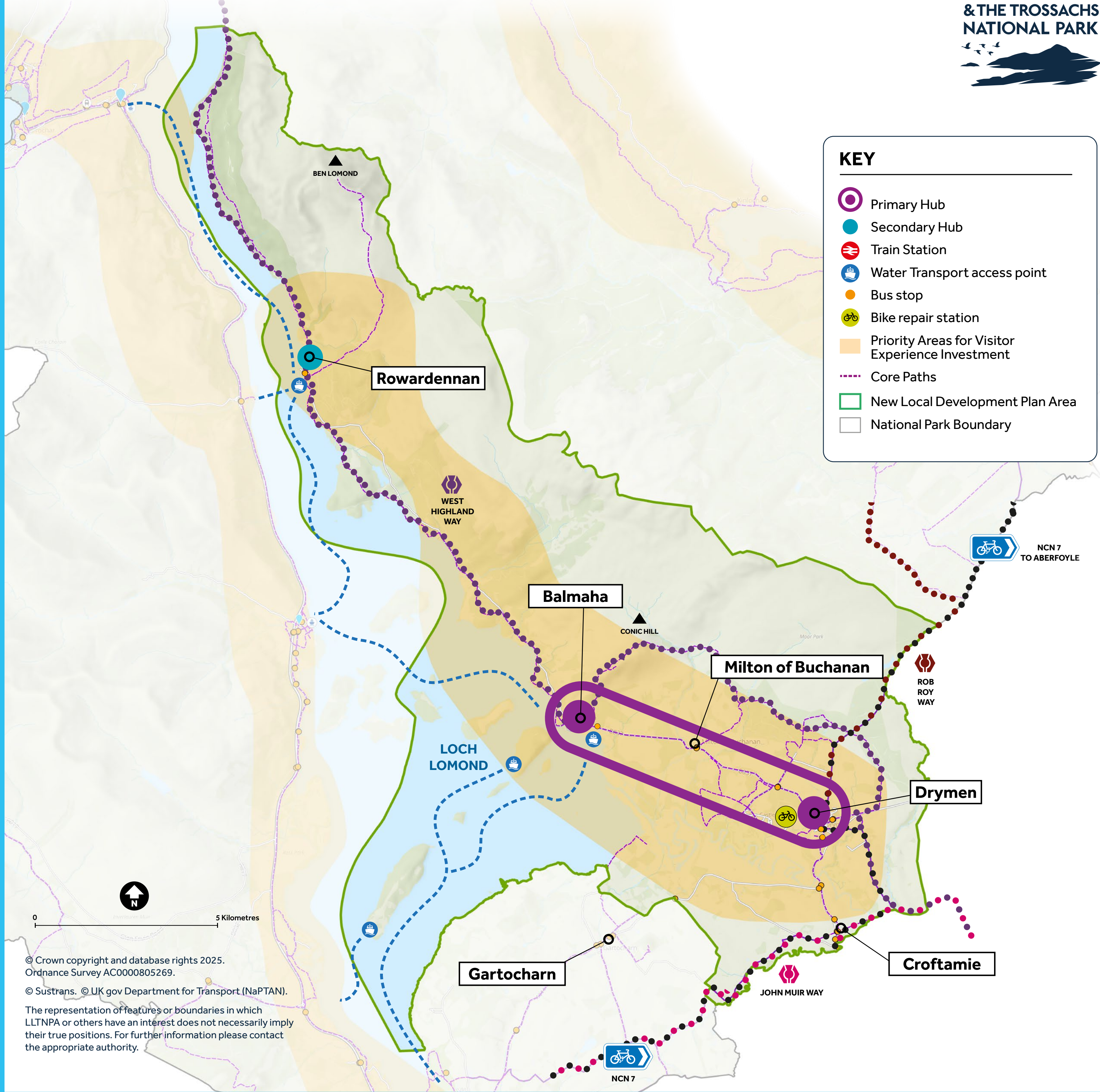
AREA BASED PLANS AND STRATEGIES

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

- East Loch Lomond Strategic Tourism Infrastructure Development Study (STID)
- Stirling Council’s Sustainable Mobility Strategy [Draft]
- Stirling Council Towns, Villages and Rural Areas Transport Plan 2017 – 2027
- Tactran Regional Transport Strategy 2024-2034

EAST LOCH LOMOND

A CARBON NEGATIVE PLACE | UNDERSTANDING THE PLACE MAP



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.

The A811 is the most heavily used road between Gartocharn and Drymen and beyond to Balloch and Stirling, and (joining the A81) to Aberfoyle and Glasgow. Between Drymen and Rowardennan the B837/C6 road is highly used by visitors.

VISITOR PRESSURE AND CONGESTION HOTSPOTS

Owing to visitor pressures affecting the communities, businesses and visitors here, the B837 route northwest of Drymen to Balmaha (and its continuation onto the C6 road to Rowardennan) was identified as an area for a national intervention and Strategic Study (STID).

Visitor pressures in terms of vehicles and behaviours are experienced in communities and visitor sites and along roads, including at Drymen, Balmaha, Milarrochy Bay, Rowardennan and other access points to Conic Hill, Loch Lomond and Ben Lomond along the B837 and C6. There are known issues with irresponsible roadside parking on the B837/C6 which at peak times has restricted emergency vehicle access. By contrast, the visitor site at Cashel Forest is at times underused.

SAFE COMMUNITY ACTIVE TRAVEL AND CHALLENGES OF LOCAL LIVING

The National Cycle Route 7 runs along the eastern edge of the East Loch Lomond area connecting with Balloch via Croftamie and Gartocharn, and to Aberfoyle via Drymen and Gartmore.

The active travel route between the communities of Drymen and Balmaha requires further consideration to create a safer, more accessible route.

The rural nature of the area creates challenges in living well locally both in terms of path networks and also in terms of interconnectivity of public transport within the area.

OPPORTUNITIES

INFRASTRUCTURE AND SERVICES INVESTMENT

A more coordinated, connected 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 service investment include:

- Infrastructure improvements at identified sites which include Balmaha, Rowardennan, Milarrochy and Drymen.
 - Blue and green infrastructure improvements across all site infrastructure, active travel and transport developments to benefit biodiversity.
 - Sustainable transport strategy connecting the hubs of Drymen and Balmaha and beyond.
 - Exploring options for Park & Ride at Drymen.
 - Maximising the potential of the long-distance routes for visitors, communities and businesses.
- Active travel improvements, especially between Drymen, Balmaha, Gartocharn and Rowardennan, with opportunities for a cycle path on the B837.
 - Creating better water transport connections to and from Balmaha and Rowardennan across Loch Lomond.
 - Exploring partnership arrangements between car park owners in the area, to offer efficiencies and cost savings with car park management and maintenance and enable revenue to be re-invested into local transport services.

LOCAL DELIVERY PARTNERSHIPS

East Loch Lomond 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:

Drymen Local Place Plan 2023-32

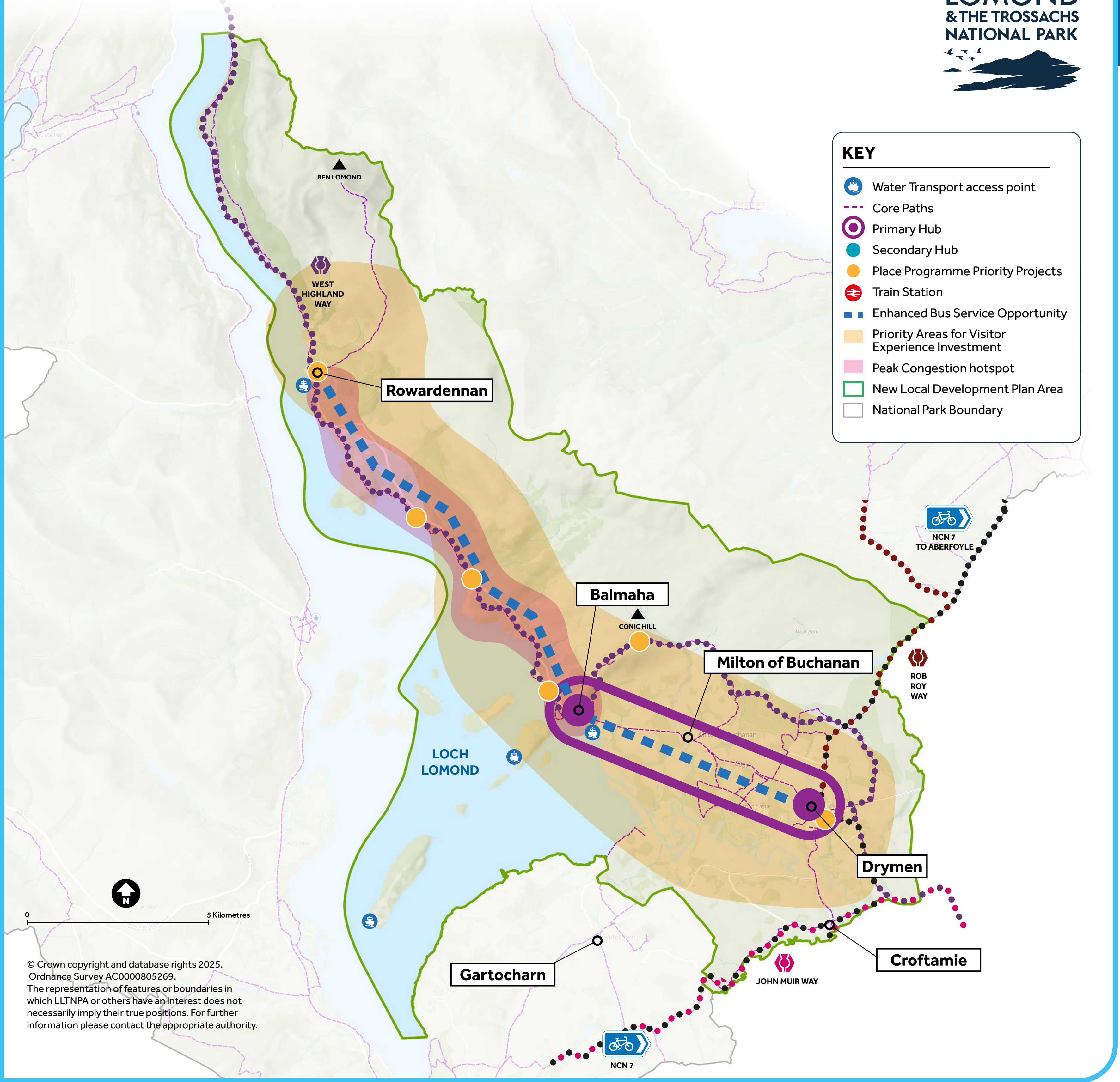
- A walking/cycling route Drymen to RSPB reserve and Gartocharn.
- A Drymen-Balfron path and cycle route.

Kilmarnock Place Plan 2024-34

- Paths, signage and parking.
- A safe network of walking routes from Gartocharn to Drymen.

EAST LOCH LOMOND

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.”

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.

Drymen is the main services hub for this area. There are larger service hubs located outside East Loch Lomond in Balloch and Balfron.

DRYMEN

Drymen and the villages of East Loch Lomond: Living Well Locally Vision and Routemap summarises the project that explored with the community how people can live more locally, linking with surrounding communities.

Drymen Village provides some services, but the low range of food retail, combined with limited transport efficiency, presents challenges for local living. Enhancing food accessibility and high-frequency transport connections would further strengthen its self-sufficiency and role as a service hub for the surrounding area.

As a local-living hub, connectivity between Drymen and nearby villages is a priority to meet residents’ needs and reduce reliance on private cars. Drymen uses services further afield in Balloch which can be accessed by public transport, and Balfron and Stirling (both by car). The area shares the common challenges of poor public transport to the north and east, including Stirling, and a lack of opportunities for young people and families.

BALMAHA

Balmaha has few essential services making local living challenging. Balmaha uses services further afield in Drymen, and Balloch which can be accessed by public transport, and Balfron and Stirling (by car). Balmaha in particular has very high visitor pressures within the area.

CROFTAMIE

The only local living service within the village is a café making living well locally very challenging. Residents in Croftamie use Drymen, Balloch, Balfron and Stirling for their local living services. A bus service is available to Drymen via Direct Rural Transport.

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 include the Drymen Village Sustainable Travel Hub, Buchanan Community Hydro, halls in Milton of Buchanan and Drymen, and land in Balmaha set aside for housing.

HISTORIC ENVIRONMENT

GARDENS AND DESIGNED LANDSCAPES

There are no Inventory of Gardens and Designed Landscapes sites in this area. Buchanan Castle has been removed from the Inventory. Other historic designed landscapes include Wards and Park of Drumquhassle.

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. There are a number of identified buildings at risk in this area including Buchanan Castle and various buildings within the grounds, and Pirniehall in Croftamie.

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:

- Drymen Local Place Plan 2023-32**
- › Developing the Former Salmon Leap and Garage
 - › Public toilets
 - › Electric car-charging
 - › Recycling facilities
 - › Identifying a new library site

AREA BASED PLANS AND STRATEGIES

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

- › East Loch Lomond Strategic Tourism Infrastructure Development Study (STID)

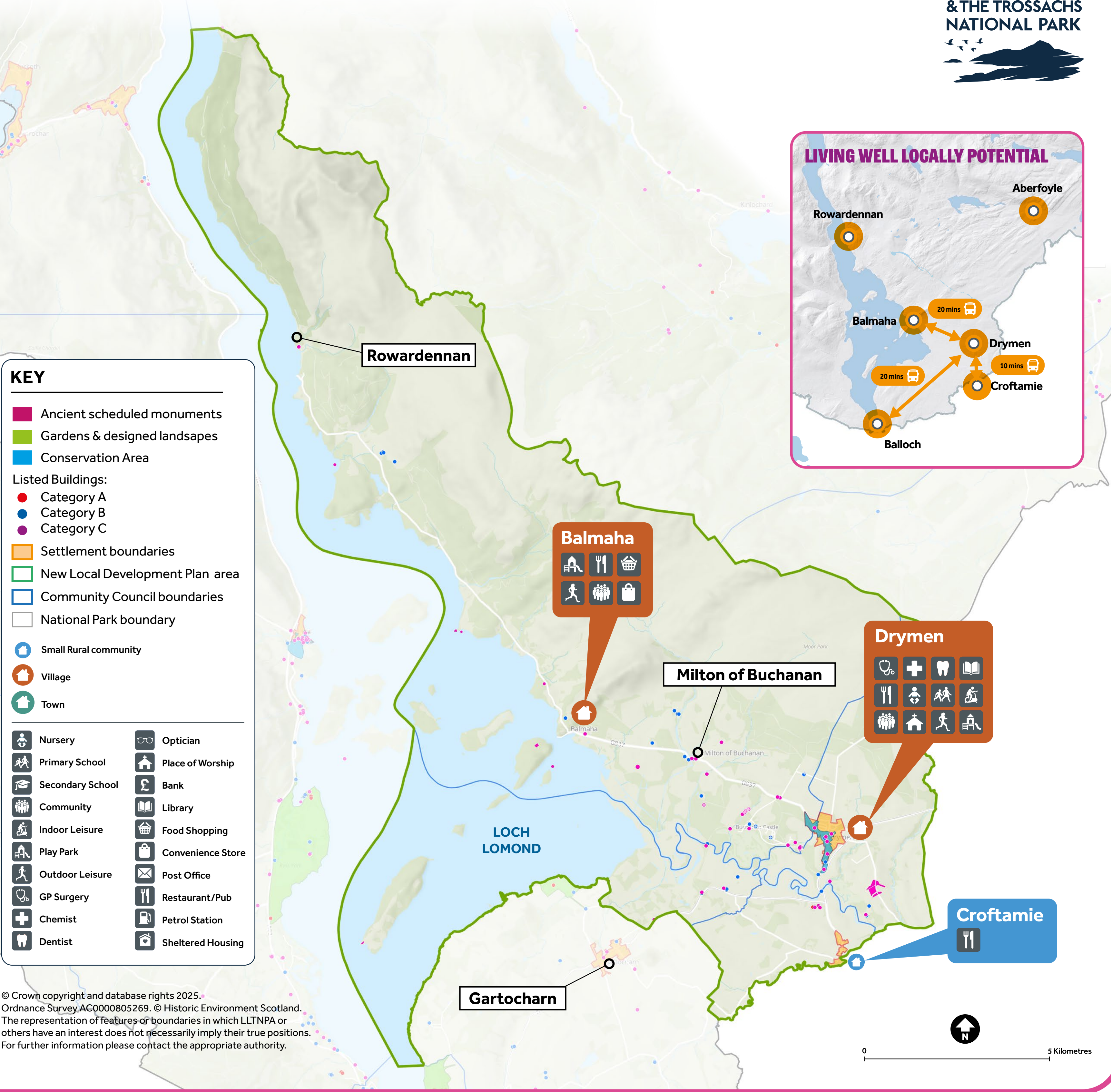
› Stirling Council’s Sustainable Mobility Strategy [Draft]

› Stirling Council Towns, Villages and Rural Areas Transport Plan 2017 – 2027
- › Drymen and the villages of East Loch Lomond: Living Well Locally Vision and Routemap

› Local Place Plan Profile and Data Packs

EAST LOCH LOMOND

A THRIVING PLACE | COMMUNITY AND LOCAL LIVING MAP



A THRIVING PLACE: GREENER ECONOMY AND INVESTING

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 Proposed 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 West Highland Way attracts 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 the growing presence of second homes and short-term rentals, exacerbates affordability issues and reduces the availability of long-term housing. These trends contribute to house price inflation and strain the housing system.

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.

In the area, the primary employment hubs are identified as Drymen and Balmaha.

NATURE TOURISM SITES

Cashel Forest

Over the past few decades, this area has been part of a major reforestation project aimed at restoring Scotland's ancient woodlands. Native tree species like Scots pine, oak, birch, and rowan have been planted, creating a diverse and thriving habitat for wildlife.

Balmaha Visitor Centre

Visitors can learn about the geology and history of the National Park. There is a nature-themed play area with various activities designed for children. Rangers provide information, maps, and advice about spotting local wildlife, and can guide visitors to explore Inchcailloch and the Millenium Forest Path.

DIGITAL INFRASTRUCTURE AND CONNECTIVITY

The predominantly rural nature of the National Park poses issues to broadband access for those residents, visitors and businesses in the park. Data shows that there are areas here that have limited access or are unable to access broadband, however most of these areas are outwith the settlements. A high proportion of the area where people live receive superfast broadband. The area has good mobile network coverage.

VACANT AND DERELICT AND UNDERDEVELOPED LAND

There is a small area of vacant or derelict land at a house site in Drymen (0.25 ha).

DEVELOPMENT ACTIVITY - PLANNING APPLICATIONS

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

2016/0024/DET: Former Highland Way Hotel - Erection of tourism development including lodges, restaurant, smokehouse/brewery and parking. Approved and partially implemented.

2016/0399/DET: Land to East of Montrose House – Erection of 20 affordable houses/flats and 2 open market houses. The consent has been implemented but no works on building the houses has commenced to date.

2022/0329/PPP: Pirniehall, Croftamie -mixed use residential and tourism development including conversion of former residential school. Approved at Committee but decision not yet issued as Section 75 Legal Agreement to be completed.

2023/0450/DET: Laurelfields, Main Street, Drymen - Erection of 12 Dwellings Currently under consideration.

RSPB Loch Lomond

This reserve is set in a mix of woodlands and wetlands on Loch Lomond. Breathtaking views and a diverse mix of habitats provide an excellent opportunity to view a variety of wildlife. The reserve includes a small visitor and education centre.

Ben Lomond National Trust for Scotland

Ardess Lodge at Ben Lomond is a ranger base for Ben Lomond. It also provides a bunkhouse for overnight accommodation for those using the West Highland Way or those undertaking voluntary conservation projects.

EAST LOCH LOMOND

A THRIVING PLACE | GREENER ECONOMY AND INVESTING MAP

