

# WEST 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:

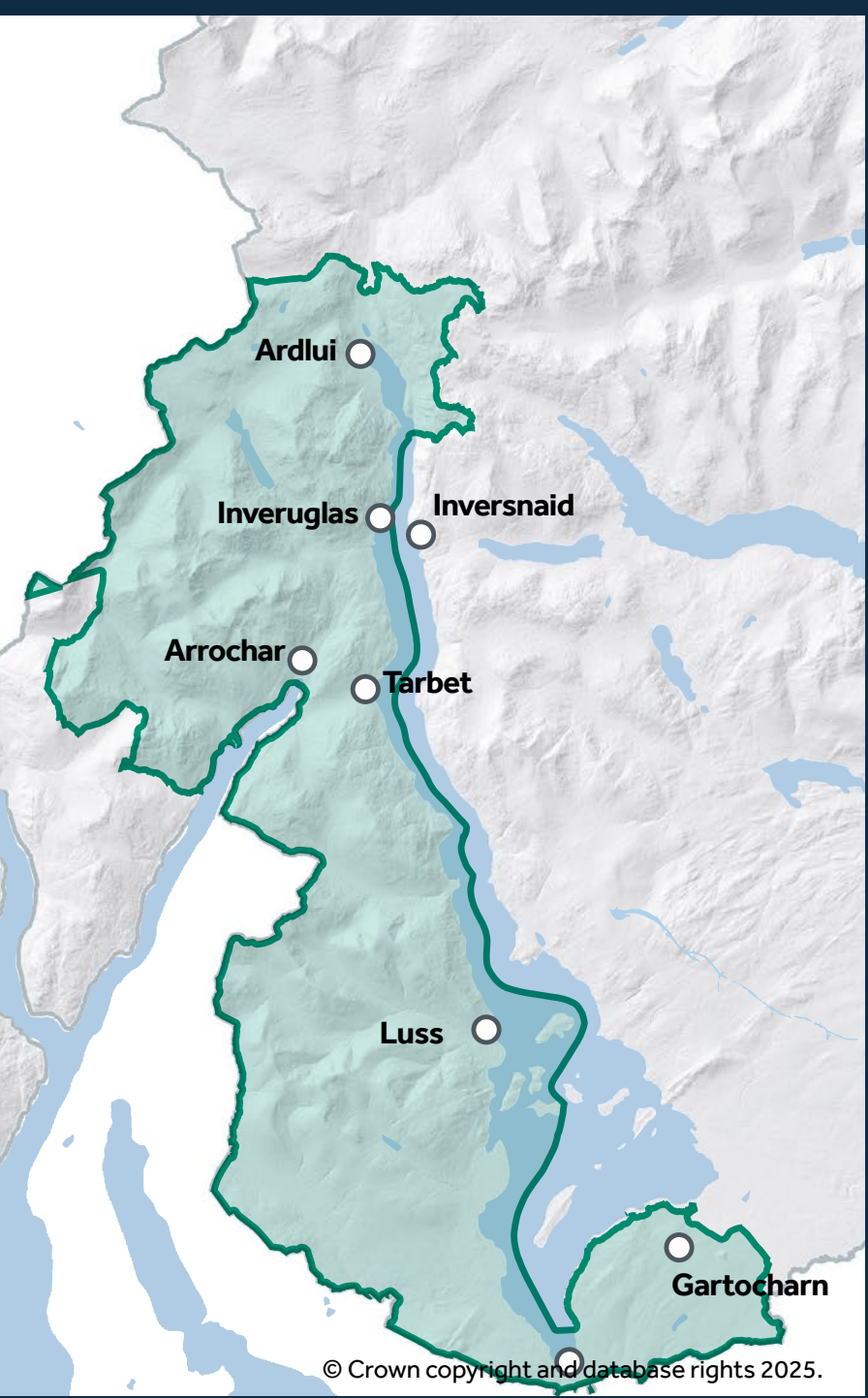
A NATURE POSITIVE PLACE  
RESTORING NATURE

A CARBON NEGATIVE PLACE  
CREATING A LOW CARBON PLACE

A THRIVING PLACE  
DESIGNING A GREENER WAY OF LIVING



## ABOUT WEST LOCH LOMOND



### DEFINING THE PLACE

This area takes in Balloch and northwards along Loch Lomond, including the islands of Inchmoan, Inchtavannach, Inchonnanchan and Inchlonaig. It covers the Conservation Area Village of Luss north to Ardlui and from Tarbet to Arrochar and the Rest and Be Thankful and the Argyll Forest in the West. At the south of Loch Lomond, it includes the village of Gartocharn, extending to the loch shore, to the eastern edge of the village, and to the south to the National Park boundary.

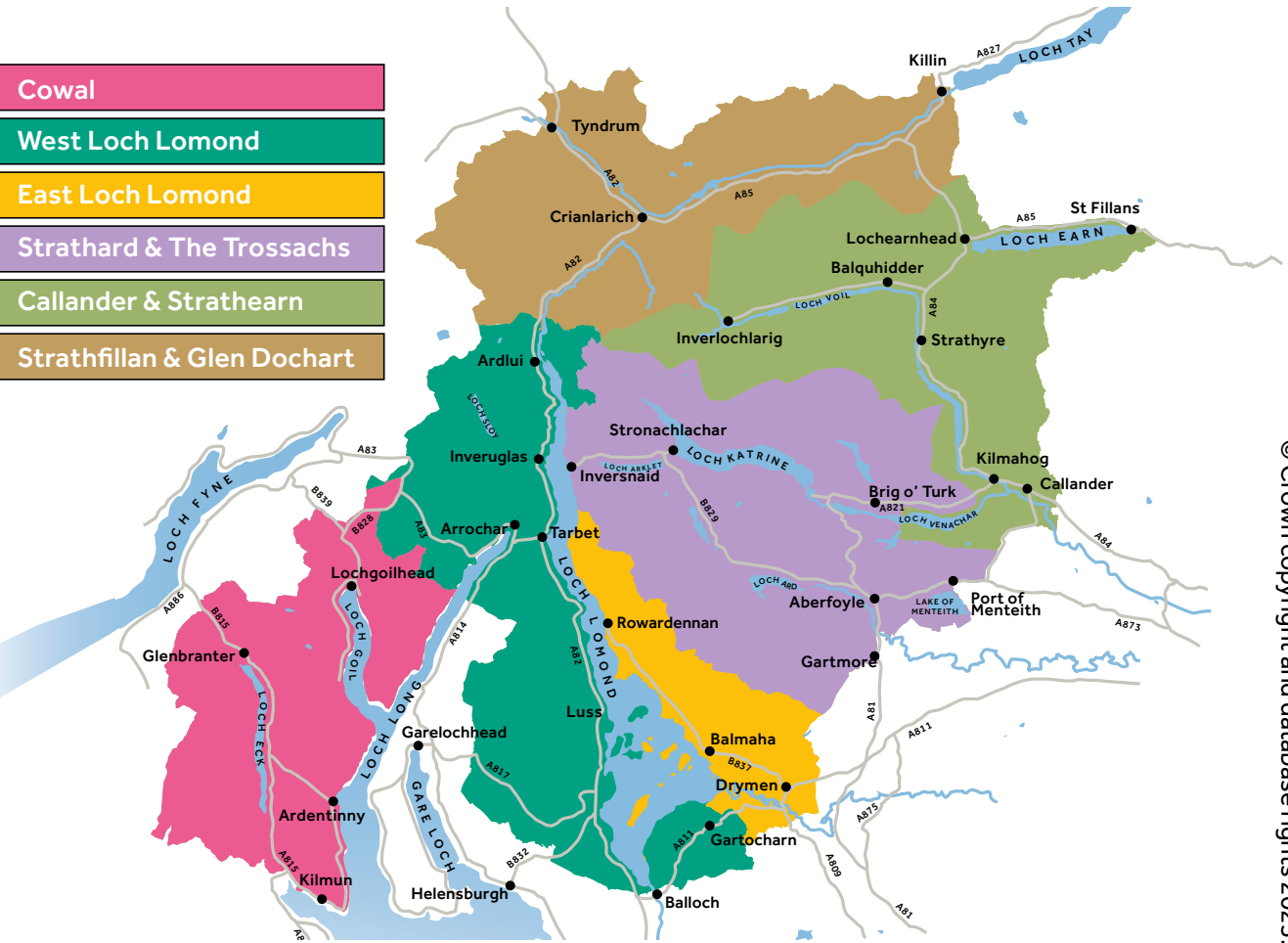
#### Community Council wards:

- Arrochar, Tarbet and Ardlui
- Luss and Arden
- Balloch and Haldane

The area also covers in part Community Council wards of Kilmaronock, Rhu and Shandon, and Garelochhead that straddle the National Park boundary.

#### Local Authorities:

- West Dunbartonshire Council
- Argyll and Bute Council



### PICTURE OF THE PLACE

Loch Lomond, the largest inland stretch of water in Britain, is one of the most popular destinations in Scotland. Stretching 24 miles north from Balloch, it is popularly known as an access point to the Highlands. This popularity brings with it both pressures and opportunities in West Loch Lomond.

Balloch is the main visitor and transport access point to the National Park having a railway station and being well connected to the Central Belt by road, rail, walking, wheeling and cycle routes, including the John Muir Way and National Cycle Route 7. The West Highland Railway Line, one of Scotland's most scenic railway lines, also runs through this area, with stations at both Arrochar/Tarbet and Ardlui.

The main A82 road offers easy access to villages and viewpoints along the west side of the loch, such as Luss, Arden, Firkin Point and Tarbet. Hugging the same shoreline, from Balloch to Tarbet, is a traffic-free cycle route, the West Loch Lomond Cycle Path.

On the A83, the dramatic pass of Rest and Be Thankful, through Glen Croe forms a natural, major route leading through the mountain ranges, the Arrochar Alps, between Lochs Long and Fyne. It provides a long uphill passage into the Western Highlands, marked by tumbling burns and waterfalls, with views back down to the distant mountains enclosing Lochs Long and Lomond.



## PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT IN WEST LOCH LOMOND



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

West Loch Lomond is home to National Infrastructure priorities as shown in the National Park Partnership Plan: the A82 and A83 trunk roads, West Highland Railway Line, Sloy Hydro Electric Power station and electricity transmission lines.

Planned improvements are identified on the A83 Ardgartan to Cairndow and A82 Tarbet to Inverarnan, at Sloy Hydro Electric Power Station and on upgrades to the power lines between Sloy to Garelochhead and, adjacent to the National Park, from Dunoon to Loch Long.

### NATIONAL PARK PARTNERSHIP PLAN DELIVERY TO BE CONSIDERED

Balloch and Arrochar & Tarbet are highlighted in the National Park Partnership Plan as areas for strategic investment and development:

- Balloch: Investment that enhances Balloch as the main visitor and transport interchange hub for the National Park.
- Arrochar & Tarbet: Focus on addressing vacant and derelict sites to support rural regeneration.

### DEVELOPMENT ACTIVITY - PLANNING APPLICATIONS

The recent development activity this area is experiencing is tourism, housing, road upgrades, energy generation and transmission.

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

### LUSS & ARDEN LOCAL PLACE PLAN 2023

The most significant challenge facing the community is how to cope with the massive number of visitors each year, whilst also offering good quality of life and opportunities for residents. Tackling that challenge, and creating a more sustainable, balanced and thriving community into the future requires positive interventions designed to:

- Retain & Attract Families
- Strengthen The Local Community
- Manage Visitor Pressure



### ARROCHAR, TARBET & ARDLUI PLACE PLAN 2023



The challenge facing the community is how to tackle deep seated issues around housing, jobs, vacant and derelict property, the impacts of trunk road traffic with limited capacity and resource, and the need for public authorities and private landowners to play their part. Tackling that challenge, and creating a sustainable and thriving community into the future requires positive interventions designed to:

- Put The Community First
- Tackle Dereliction and Decay
- Tap Into Tourism

### BALLOCH AND HALDANE PLACE PLAN

Preparations are underway to begin this Local Place Plan. It will inform the new Local Development Plan and will be considered alongside the Balloch Charette and Balloch Pierhead Action Plans. The fundamental aim of this Place Plan will be to provide consensus on the community's future direction and priorities, serving the following purposes:

- Influence planning policy as contained in the new National Park Local Development Plan, in line with Local Place Plan legislation and guidance.
- Bring together the many different strands of community activity as well as filling in any gaps which are needed to deliver the community's priorities.
- Evidence community aspirations to help secure funding and support for community-led action, and to influence future public services and public and private sector investment.



### 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.





# 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 and 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 Coastal. The predominant landscapes are noted below:

**Semi-natural land** is 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** are 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 West Loch Lomond and its Special Qualities are important.

### LANDSCAPE CHARACTER

The Landscape Character of the area south to north along the loch is ‘Lowland Loch Basin/Lowland Loch Basin Islands’, and as the Loch narrows form Glen Douglas, ‘Straths and Glens with Lochs’. Further west of the Loch and shore at the south, a smaller pocket of ‘Rolling Farmland’ opens out into ‘Steep Hills and Ridges’, then to ‘Highland Summits’, at Arrochar and Tarbet.

### SPECIAL LANDSCAPE QUALITIES

- Special qualities of the landscape in West Loch Lomond include:
- Argyll Forest**
    - Arrochar’s mountainous and distinctive peaks
    - The dramatic pass of Rest and Be Thankful
  - 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. Sites include Loch Lomond Woods Special Area of Conservation (SAC) has multiple sites across the area, alongside the SSSI Loch Lomond Woodlands sites. SSSIs are also at Ross Park and Ben Vorlich, with a Geological Conservation Review site at Ben Artair (the Cobbler). At the northeast lies Glen Etive and Glen Fyne Special Protection Area.

Landscape designations include the Loch Lomond National Scenic Area (NSA), and Balloch Castle Country Park.

#### 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 west of Luss will reduce the amount of emissions, create the conditions for carbon capture, improve water quality and storage, and bring many other benefits for climate, nature and people

This is a wooded area, home to Atlantic Oak Woodland, the Argyll Forest 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.

#### 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.

Beavers are present in the River Falloch and southern end of the loch. An ongoing NatureScot survey will provide a clearer picture of beaver distribution in the coming months.

The Glen Etive and Glen Fyne Special Protection Area is classified for its breeding golden eagle population.

#### WATER AND CATCHMENTS

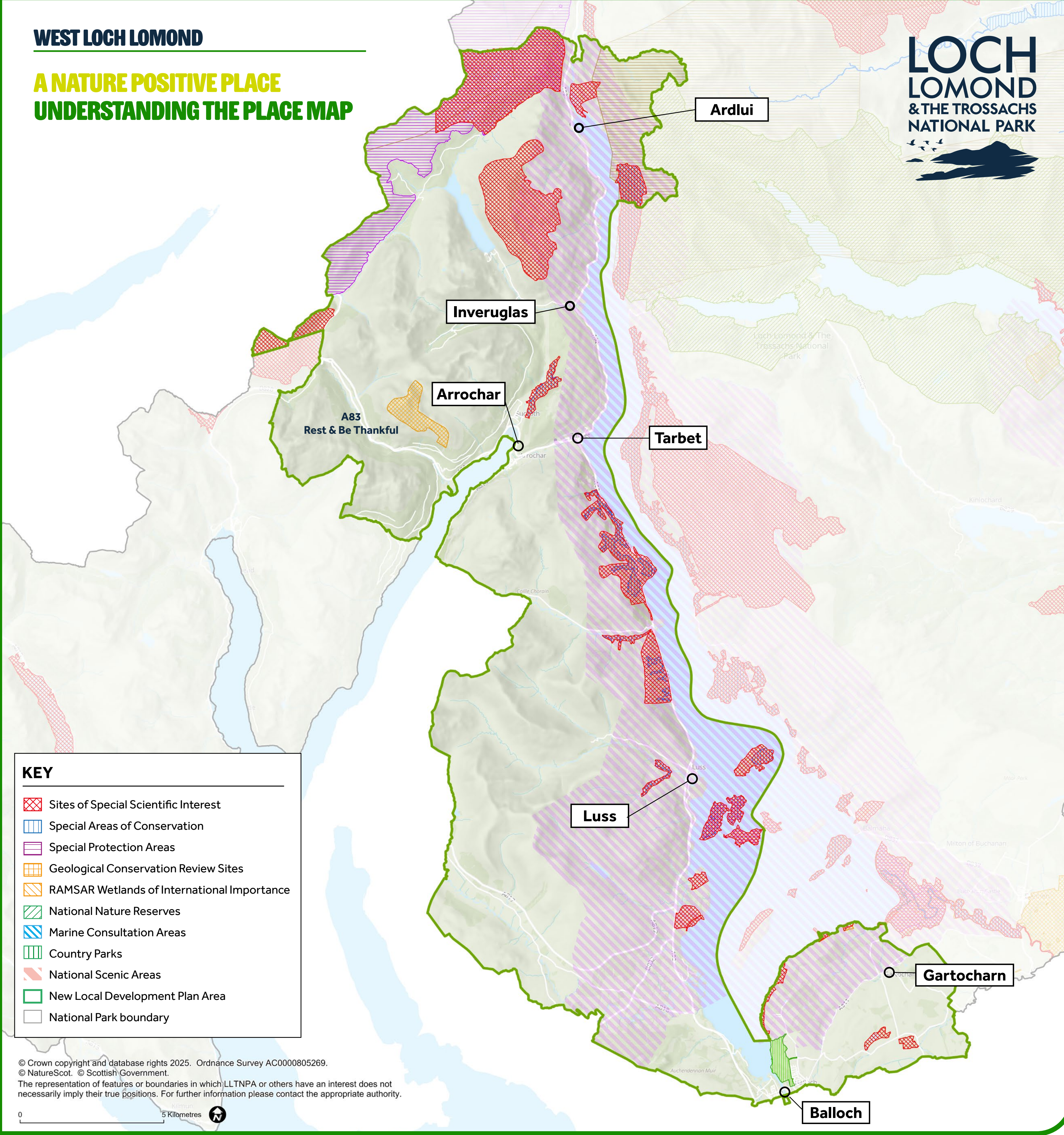
The area is a landscape of large lochs, freshwater in the east and coastal narrows in the west, with Loch Lomond and Loch Long, and the Loch Sloy reservoir.

It is within the water catchments of Leven around the Loch, and Cowal/Clyde Sea Lochs to the west by Arrochar. 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.

#### 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





# 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:

- **Balloch** – flood risk, increased precipitation, storms and, on the hills, wildfires.

➤ **A82, locations south and including Luss** – flood risk, increased precipitation, storms.

➤ **A82, locations north of Luss** – storms and wildfires.
- **Glen Fruin** – flood risk, increased precipitation, storms.

➤ **A83, Arrochar and Tarbet** – flood risk, increased precipitation, storms.

➤ **A83, Rest and be Thankful** – flood risk, increased precipitation, landslips and wildfires.

We will also draw on the Argyll and Bute Climate Strategy (Draft November 2024) and West Dunbartonshire Council's Climate Change Strategy (2021).

#### AREAS VULNERABLE TO FLOODING AND COASTAL EROSION

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 here are vulnerable to both river and surface water flooding, with Arrochar and Succoth also vulnerable to coastal flooding. Balloch is in a community based Potentially Vulnerable Area (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.

Future coastal erosion is not identified here; however coastal defences are located around the Head of Loch Long.

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

Invasive non-native species are a pressure here including riparian species, rhododendron and grey squirrels.

#### TREE HEALTH

Phytophthora ramorum (affecting Larch), and the resultant changes to the landscape and nature are a pressure here. The area straddles the Phytophthora ramorum, Risk Reduction Zone (where spread and scale of infection is beyond what can be controlled locally with available resources) and the 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 west of the National Park.

#### 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 the water quality of Luss Bathing Water, and marine litter/debris at Loch Long, Arrochar. Tackling marine litter/debris here will likely require interconnected solutions combining cultural and technological approaches.

### 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 in the uplands to the west of Luss,

➤ Native Woodland Restoration and expansion (avoiding peatland restoration areas) and

➤ Water and Wetland Restoration in combination with woodland expansion following the shore of 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 and sediment management.

#### FUTURE NATURE LANDSCAPE SCALE RESTORATION PROJECTS

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.

#### SIGNIFICANT FORESTRY OPERATIONS OPPORTUNITIES

The early restructuring of forests affected by Phytophthora ramorum presents opportunities for native woodland restoration.

The Cruach Tarbert Strategic Larch Removal Plan (SLaRP) is being implemented to remove all larch from this commercial conifer plantation which dominates the northwest side of this area. This has created an opportunity where the restocking will adjoin extensive areas of existing ancient woodland which is recorded on the Ancient Woodland Inventory and forms core parts of the Loch Lomond Rainforest, extending this habitat southwards and providing connected native woodland habitat.

#### 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.

This area is covered by four deer management groups: West Loch Lomond, Loch Lomond Islands, Cowal and Inveraray and Tyndrum.

#### LOCAL PLACE PLANS AND RESTORING NATURE

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

- Arrochar, Tarbet & Ardlui Place Plan 2023**

➤ Arrochar, Head of the Loch – Marine Debris.

➤ Native woodland expansion.

**Luss & Arden Local Place Plan 2023**

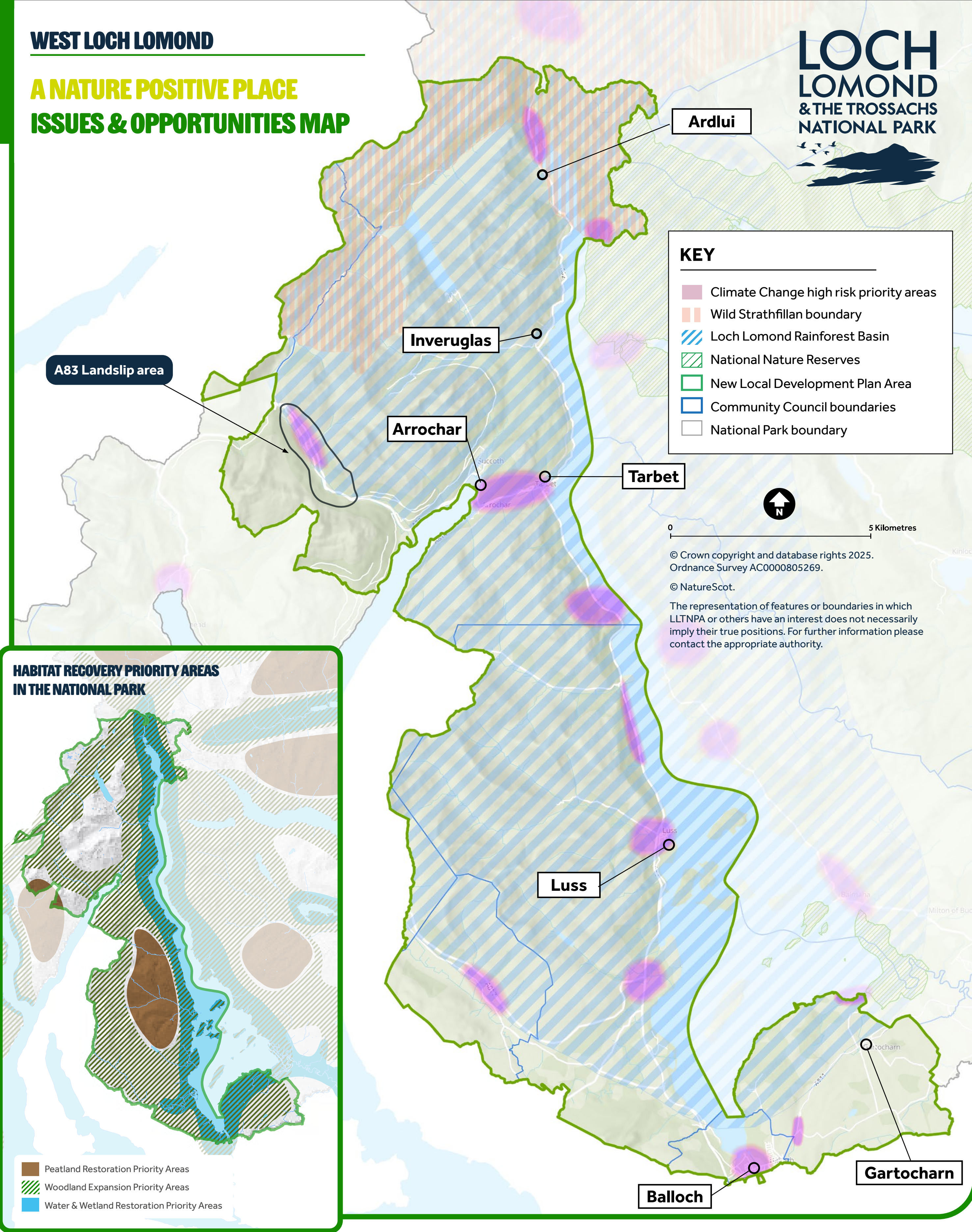
- North car park to Greenspace.

**And generally, across all Local Place Plans:**

➤ Invasive non-native species (INNS) removal across the wider landscape.

### WEST 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. There are two priority areas here.

The West Loch Lomond Priority Area stretches from Arrochar and Tarbet southward to meet the edge of Balloch. It contains the primary hub of Arrochar and Tarbet and the secondary hub of Luss. Infrastructure investment at key visitor hubs, such as Arrochar and Tarbet 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.

The Priority Area of Balloch joins with West Loch Lomond. It contains the primary hub of Balloch, sitting on the shores of Loch Lomond and forms the main gateway to the National Park. Balloch attracts a high number of tourists with easy access from Glasgow and is notable for being the main access to Loch Lomond, the Country Park, Loch Lomond Shores and numerous historic buildings. Infrastructure investment at key visitor hubs, such as at Balloch, 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 Primary Hubs in this area are good, however within West Lomond and beyond to other areas of the National Park connections are often lacking.

### LONG DISTANCE PATH ROUTES

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

- The Three Lochs Way
- The John Muir Way
- West Loch Lomond Cycle Path traffic-free cycle route
- National Cycle Network NCN7

Except for the Three Lochs Way, some sections of these routes 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 access public bike repair stations in Alexandria (2.5km south of Balloch) and an installation is pending in Tarbet.
- There are no e-bike Charging Facilities.

### ROADS

The main A82 and A83 roads pass through this area and are identified in the National Park Partnership Plan as areas for planned improvements.

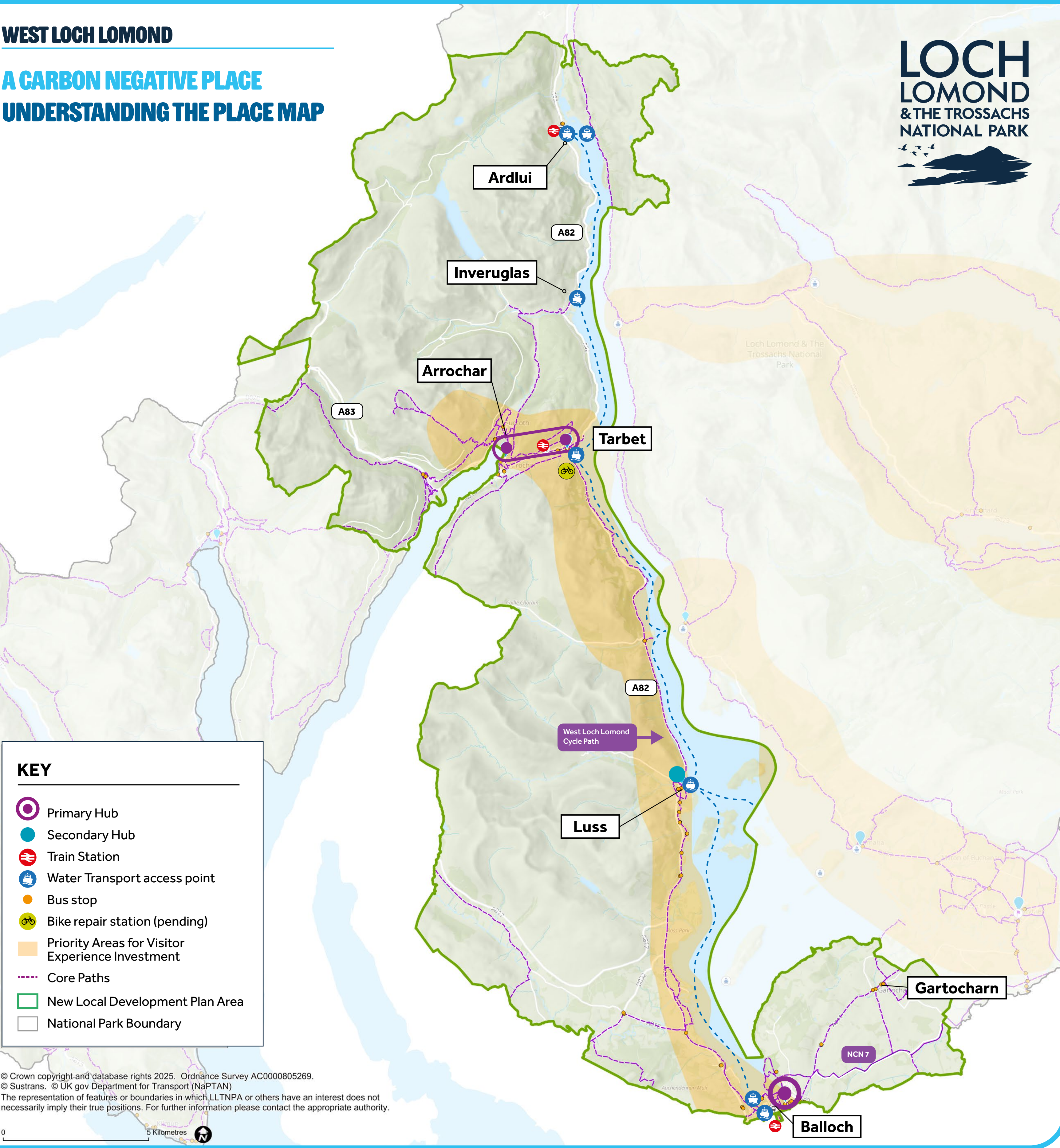
### AREA BASED PLANS AND STRATEGIES

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

- West Loch Lomond Strategic Tourism Infrastructure Development Study (STID)
- West Dunbartonshire Council Active Travel Strategy [Draft]
- Argyll and Bute Active Travel Strategy [Draft]
- Balloch Charette Report

## WEST 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. Throughout the National Park, the busiest traffic routes are primarily to the south and west. The A82 is the most heavily used road in this area.

### VISITOR PRESSURE AND CONGESTION HOTSPOTS

Owing to visitor pressures affecting communities, businesses and visitors here, the A82 route north of Balloch to Arrochar and Tarbet 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 including the A82 road and its laybys, Balloch, Luss and Duck Bay, Tarbet and access points to the Arrochar Alps on the A83. There is peak time congestion on A82 between Arden and Balloch due to Faslane base traffic. By contrast, the Forestry and Land Scotland Ardgartan site is underused.

### SAFE COMMUNITY ACTIVE TRAVEL AND LOCAL LIVING

The West Loch Lomond Cycle Route, running from Balloch to Tarbet along the A82, is popular with pedestrians and cyclists, and could provide greater active travel opportunities. A significant amount of upgrading along the whole route is required.

The routes between the communities of Arrochar and Tarbet require further consideration to create a safer, more accessible route.

Future road improvements on the A83 and A82 have the potential to unlock further active travel provision.

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, 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 Balloch, Tarbet and Arrochar.
- Blue and green infrastructure improvements across all site infrastructure, active travel and transport developments to benefit biodiversity.
- Sustainable transport strategy connecting the hubs of Balloch and Arrochar & Tarbet and beyond.
- Maximising the potential of the railways; West Highland Line and Balloch line.
- Active travel improvements especially between Arrochar and Tarbet and the station, with opportunities for A83 railway bridge upgrades.
- Maximising the potential of the long-distance routes, for example West Loch Lomond Cycle Route upgrade.
- Creating better water connections.

### LOCAL DELIVERY PARTNERSHIPS

Two Visitor Management groups exist here to support collaborative multi stakeholder safe management of tourism impacts:

- West Loch Lomond (north of Balloch)
- Loch Lomond Stakeholder Group

### 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:

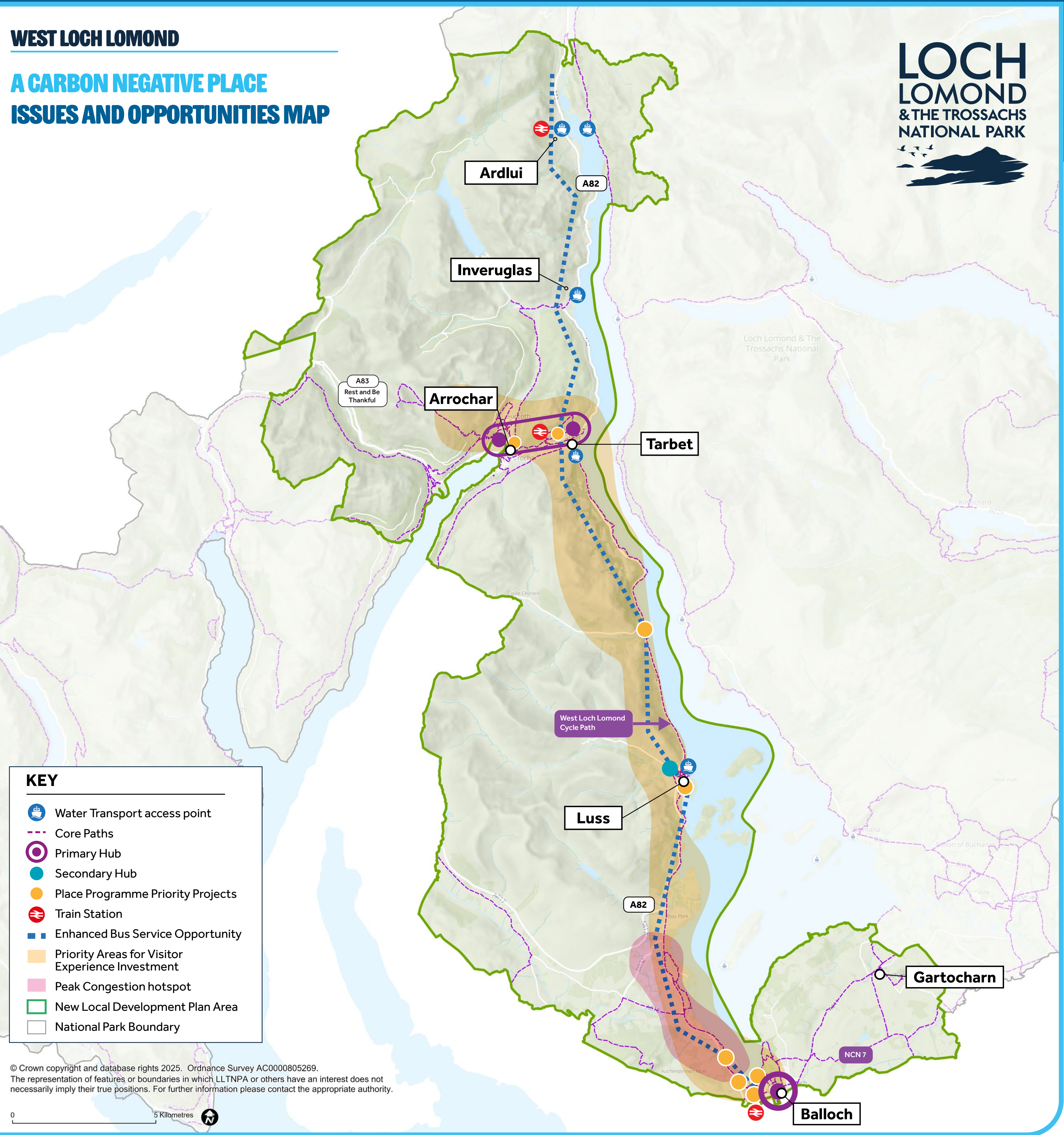
- Arrochar, Tarbet & Ardlui Place Plan 2023**
  - Path connections between Arrochar and Tarbet
  - A83 cycle route development and bus services
  - Greenspace improvements at Tarbet Pier
  - Reinstatement of Arrochar Pier
- Luss & Arden Local Place Plan 2023**
  - Parking, public toilets, and visitor signage,
  - West Loch Lomond Cycle path quality improvements
  - Improvements to Duck Bay visitor facilities

#### Kilmarnock Place Plan 2024-34

- Paths, signage and parking

## WEST 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. 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.

Balloch has a close connection to Alexandria for further local living and community facilities including secondary schooling. Arrochar & Tarbet together have the potential to be a significant service centre and are a key area for growth.

### ARROCHAR & TARBET

Arrochar & Tarbet together offer potential as a regional service hub, particularly due to rail and water transport links, but currently lack sufficient services. The communities in the area share common challenges, including housing shortages, inadequate public transport, and a lack of opportunities for young people and families. The A82's dominance affects accessibility, while Arrochar & Tarbet also struggle with vacant and derelict sites and lack a central village space.

### LUSS

Luss serves as a secondary hub and faces severe visitor pressure and an ageing population. It relies on local services in Helensburgh and Balloch.

### BALLOCH

Balloch serves as a primary hub, with rail, bus and water transport links. Connecting with nearby Alexandria, it has sufficient services for living well locally, although it shares the common challenges of public transport to the north (including Stirling) and a lack of opportunities for young people and families.

## 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 the Three Villages Hall in Arrochar, the Arrochar Hydroelectric Project operated jointly by Arrochar & Tarbet and Luss & Arden Development Trusts, Luss Village Hall, Gartocharn Millennium Hall and Kilmaronock Old Kirk.

## HISTORIC ENVIRONMENT

### GARDENS AND DESIGNED LANDSCAPES

The Inventory of Gardens and Designed Landscapes sites in this area includes Balloch Castle, Ross Priory and Rosdhu Gardens and Designed Landscape. There are also a number of Local Gardens and Designed Landscapes here.

### 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. Outwith the conservation areas there are a number of identified buildings at risk, including Balloch Castle and Woodbank House in Balloch and Tarbet Hotel, Coach House and Stables in Tarbet.

### AREA BASED PLANS AND STRATEGIES

- In addition to the Topic Paper references, the following information is local to this area:
- West Loch Lomond Strategic Tourism Infrastructure Study (STID)
  - Balloch Charette Report
  - Local Place Plan Profiles and Data Packs
  - Conservation Area Appraisals – Luss

## LOCAL PLACE PLANS & 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:

### Arrochar, Tarbet & Ardlui Place Plan 2023

- Complete Housing allocated in 2016.
- Arrochar, & Tarbet Community Hall use.
- Succoth Play Area.
- Vacant and Derelict land in Arrochar and Tarbet.
- Redevelopment of the former torpedo station.

### Luss & Arden Local Place Plan 2023

- Conservation Area protection.
- Village Green Improvements.
- Play Area.
- Two proposed Future Housing allocations.
- Re-use of Luss Visitor Centre building.
- Designating areas of tourism pressure.

### Kilmaronock Place Plan 2024-34

- Improve housing availability for all ages.
- Improve the playground and greenspace.

## WEST LOCH LOMOND

# A THRIVING PLACE COMMUNITY AND LOCAL LIVING MAP

### KEY

- Ancient scheduled monuments
- Gardens & designed landscapes
- Conservation Area
- Listed Buildings:
  - Category A
  - Category B
  - Category C
- Settlement boundaries
- New Local Development Plan area
- Community Council boundaries
- National Park boundary

- Small Rural community
- Village
- Town

- |                  |                   |
|------------------|-------------------|
| Nursery          | Optician          |
| Primary School   | Place of Worship  |
| Secondary School | Bank              |
| Community        | Library           |
| Indoor Leisure   | Food Shopping     |
| Play Park        | Convenience Store |
| Outdoor Leisure  | Post Office       |
| GP Surgery       | Restaurant/Pub    |
| Chemist          | Petrol Station    |
| Dentist          | Sheltered Housing |

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## LIVING WELL LOCALLY POTENTIAL



### Arrochar



### Tarbet



### Luss



### Gartocharn



### Balloch





**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.**

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.

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 Housing Authorities in this area are Argyll and Bute and West Dunbartonshire Councils.

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 Balch has virtually no second homes compared with 5% Park-wide. However, in Loch Lomondside 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.

There are few nature tourism sites within this area. The Forestry and Land Scotland Ardgartan centre is closed, and the site underused.

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 make up a big part of the economy.

In this area, the primary employment hubs are identified as Balloch, Duck Bay, Luss, Arrochar and Tarbet.

The predominantly rural nature of the area poses issues with broadband access. Data shows that there are small 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 Tarbet, Luss, Arrochar and Succoth. This is also the case for Balloch.

The northeastern area of Succoth has limited mobile network coverage.

In Arrochar, the Former Torpedo Range (3.61 ha) has been derelict since 2001–2004. In Tarbet, both the Tourist Information Centre (0.16 ha) and Former Harvey's Garage (0.42 ha) have been vacant since the early 2000s. In Balloch, Woodbank House (0.81 ha), a former residential site has been vacant since 1981–1985. In Arrochar & Tarbet, undeveloped vacant and derelict sites cause significant blight within communities. Where new development is needed there are challenges such as availability of suitable land, high development costs, and either limited or a lack of existing infrastructure. This is affecting the delivery of much needed development such as affordable housing.

The recent development activity this area is experiencing is tourism, housing, road upgrades, energy generation and transmission.

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.

**2021/0452/DET:** Incheonnonan - Erection of a new lodge as short-term holiday accommodation which includes a new Management Plan for the Island. Approved

**2022/0157/PPP:** Lomond Banks, Balloch – mixed use tourism and leisure development including erection of two hotels, holiday lodges, restaurants, retail and mono-rail. Refused by National Park and appeal currently being considered by the Scottish Government

**2022/0272/DET:** Sloy Switching Station  
- Construction of temporary access tracks. Under construction

**2023/0011/DET:** National Park Visitor Site, Tarbet - Redevelopment of Tarbet visitor site comprising erection of cafe, extension to toilets, expansion of car parking and landscaping. Currently under construction

**2023/0353/PPP:** Arrochar Hotel - Planning permission in principle for a mixed-use development, comprising housing, visitor centre, civic space, tourism and community facilities. Approved 2023

**2023/0374/DET:** Former Torpedo Factory, Arrochar – Mixed use tourism and leisure development including holiday homes, holiday lodges, hotel, restaurant, retail and chandlery. Currently under consideration

**2024/0189/DET:** Luss Smokehouse  
- mixed use development including  
distillery, warehouse, retail, restaurant  
and visitor centre. Approved and works  
commenced

**2024/0215/DET:** Glen Loin Crescent, Arrochar – mixed use tourism and community development including siting of caravans, café, play areas and footpaths. Currently Under Consideration

**2024/0351/DET:** High Wards Farm, Gartocharn - Erection of visitor centre, café and offices including parking and new footpath. Currently Under Consideration (footpath in this area)

**2025/0095/LBC:** Sloy Power Station - Construction of pump house building with associated infrastructure. Erection of a transformer compound and reconfiguration of internal access road. Currently Under Consideration

**2016/0391/DET:** Permissions were approved in 2019 across locations in Luss & Arden for a total of 23 open market houses and 6 affordable self-build plots. Approved

**Wind farm development activity adjacent to West Loch Lomond**  
Vale of Leven wind farm: Maximum height of 250m new submitted information reduction to 220m Still to be determined by Scottish Government Energy Consents Unit

