

Loch Lomond & the Trossachs National Park


Balmaha Place & Transport Strategy & Masterplan

The background of the slide features a faint, light-colored map of the Balmaha area. It shows a network of roads, a river or loch on the left side, and various land parcels, some of which are marked with small circles or dots, possibly indicating specific locations of interest or development sites.

Report Structure

The Masterplan for Balmaha is structured around:

- **Introduction** describing purpose, aims and objectives of this study set within context of the Loch Lomond and the Trossachs National Park Authority, national and local policies
- **Assessment** of the key issues affecting the place quality and parking capacity of the village, establish through place assessment and stakeholder engagement
- **Strategy** setting for future action which breaks in to two elements
 - Traffic Demand Management review
 - Destination Development
- **Masterplan Development** to identify key spatial & project components
- **Conclusion, Recommendations & Action Plan** establishing priorities, budget costs and phasing



What is the the role of Balmaha in addressing visitor management issues in East Loch Lomond?

Introduction

This section describes the purpose, aims and objectives of this study set within context of national and local policies

Purpose

Ironside Farrar have been commissioned to develop a transport and place-based masterplan study, focused on developing a masterplan response to address unsustainable visitor pressures and plan for visitor management in Balmaha in the East Loch Lomond area of the National Park.

This Masterplan Study seeks to confirm the role of Balmaha in addressing Visitor Management in East Loch Lomond, which the Sustainable Tourism Infrastructure Development (STID) Study for the area suggested could or should be:

- **A Primary Hub**

A hub which facilitates other ways of onward travel that are not car based

- **A Destination**

A place which retains more visitors in the village, discouraging the need for onward travel to smaller and busier East Loch Lomond destinations with reliance on the more limited C6 road corridor

This Masterplan seeks to develop this role, the study seeks to address:

- infrastructure capacity
- Transport/parking issues
- impacts on the local communities
- weaknesses to visitor experience

The purpose of this document is to describe the Balmaha masterplan and determine the impact, sustainability, complexity, timescale and order of cost for the constituent projects. Having identified projects to be delivered, the study is intended inform and accompany bids for funding and inform the initial project stages, the first stage being developed design.

Aims & Objectives

The Place-based approach to the scoping and planning the project will examine in more detail how:

- infrastructure can be developed in Balmaha, dovetailing with other park-wide transport and facility planning initiatives, to ensure places can manage increasing numbers of visitors.
- inadequate existing visitor infrastructure can be enhanced by planning and delivering improved services and through supporting the provision of public transport options to reduce vehicular pressures.
- the National Park Authority's Climate Emergency drive towards net zero development planning. Can be delivered
- investment in improved infrastructure can be a catalyst for active economic recovery in the area post-Covid.
- the project can be viewed as a model for other settlement-based hotspot areas already identified by the Park Authority for similar focus of strategic investment and partnership planning.

The Loch Lomond Modal Shift & Options Appraisal Study is currently underway, commissioned by the Loch Lomond and the Trossachs National Park Authority Ansons Consulting will complete by Spring 2023. The study will determine the National Park Authority's detailed response to developing and operation of sustainable travel . Therefore, completed in advance of these findings, the following study seeks to highlight the opportunities Balmaha can offer in supporting modal shift and potential future sustainable travel initiatives.

In summary, the master planning of the hotspot of Balmaha, builds on the East Loch Lomond feasibility and scoping phase to bring together the needs of place, people and partners to develop a comprehensive place-based masterplan shaping a sustainable future for one of the most popular tourism village destinations in Scotland.



Assessment

This section assesses key issues affecting the place quality and transport capacity of the village, which has been established through place assessment and stakeholder engagement

Issues

The Masterplan seeks to explore and develop the role of Balmaha supporting opportunity for sustainable outdoor recreation whilst mitigating the adverse impacts of visitors within East Loch Lomond. The East Loch Lomond Sustainable Tourism Infrastructure Development Study (STID) identified the area as a 'visitor hotspot' and indicated that seasonal local adverse impacts are focused around limited road/parking capacity, overcrowding of the limited and small scale points of access to water on the east shore of the loch, exacerbated by high demand through period of Covid restrictions and current peak season use.

Key issues to address are:

- Arrival points and facilities that can sustainably support the needs of visitors
- Traffic congestion on the B837 & C6, the latter being particularly narrow and unsuitable for high vehicle flows, the former being subject to peak season closure during particularly busy periods.
- Parking Overflow – busy periods see parking on road verges causing road blockages
- Overcrowding/ anti-social behaviour at key access points to water (Salloch/ Milarrochy/ Rowardennan)
- Litter/toileting associated with high levels of use and lack of 24hrs access/ facilities
- Community issues with traffic, parking demands, sharing and contributing to a coordinated plan

Context

Assessment has been undertaken with reference to national and local planning policy & design guidance with specific reference to:

- Loch Lomond & the Trossachs National Park Place Plan
- Buchanan Community Action Plan
- Local Development Plan
- Buchanan South Supplementary Guidance Rural Development Framework

Local Perspective

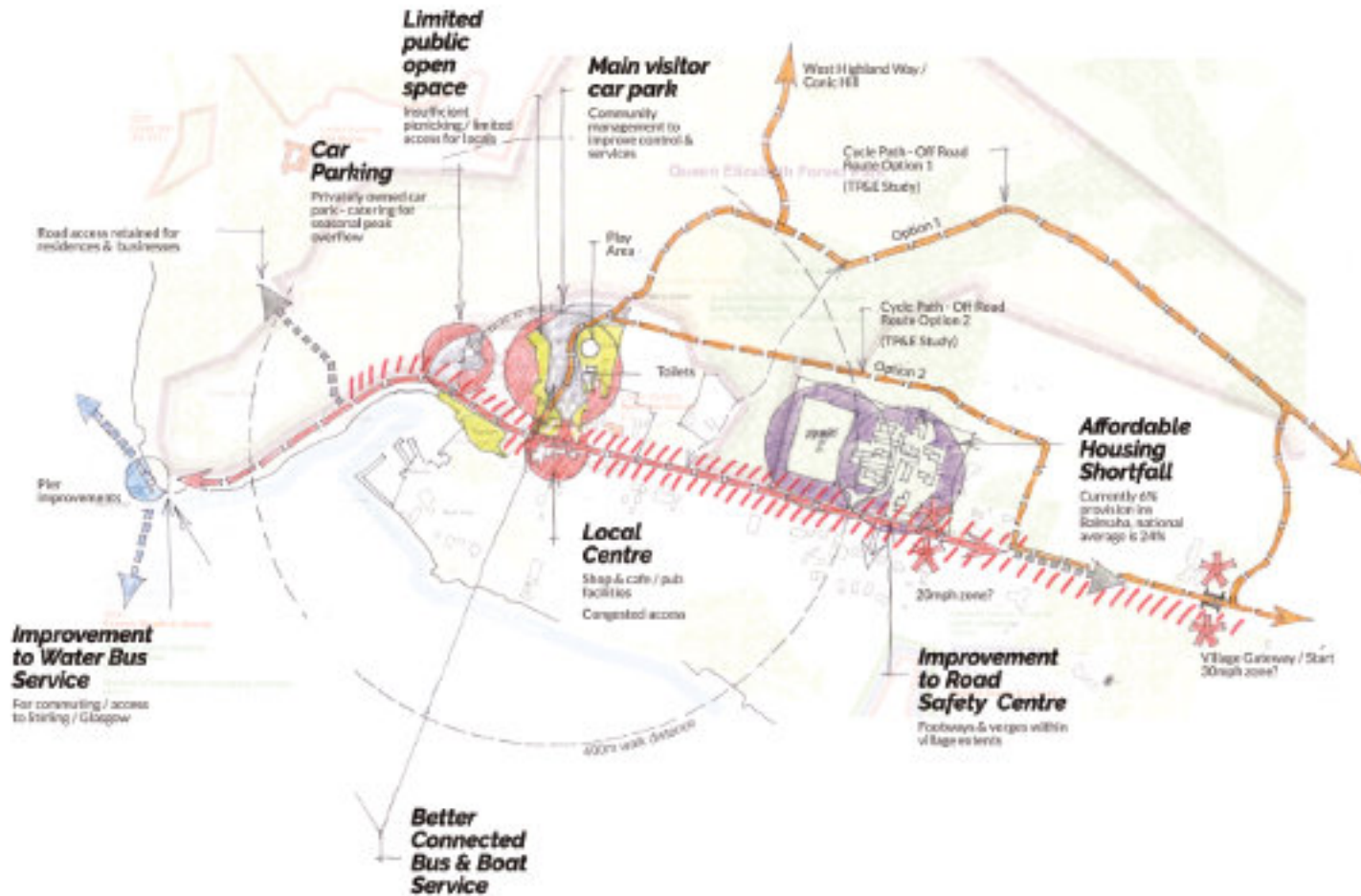
Local involvement, through engagement with local stakeholders, has been secured through attendance at a workshop events and one-to-one meetings with stakeholders unable to attend but seeking to contribute.

- Workshop 1, exploring the place assessment, held between 10am and 4pm at the visitor centre in Balmaha on the 16th August 2022
- Workshop 2, presenting and discussing emerging masterplan ideas, held between 4pm and 7pm at the visitor centre in Balmaha on the 9th November 2022

Those who participated include:

- East Loch Lomond Community Trust / Cashel Forest Trust / Oak Tree Inn / Sweeney's Cruise Co / Cruise Loch Lomond / Loch Lomond & the Trossachs National Park Authority / Forestry & Land Scotland / Stirling Council

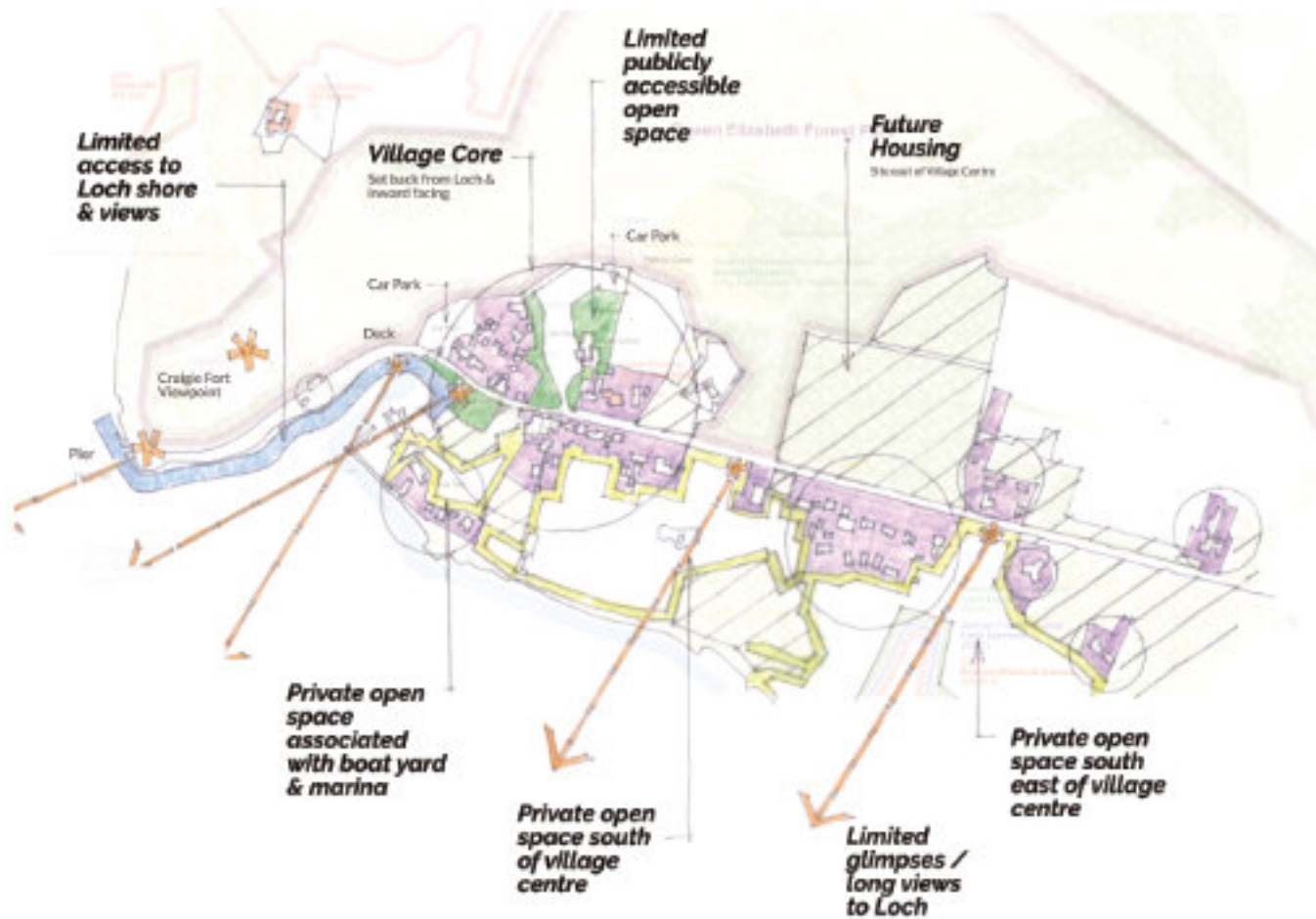
Community Issues



Assessment & Engagement tells us

- Village congestion occurs at peak times however, on the whole, capacity is acceptable on a day to day basis
- Public transport services to the village and onward connections need to be improved
- Safe active travel access route to Drymen needs to be completed
- Affordable housing is being sought to sustain a village population
- Community Facilities are limited/insufficient (play/picnic/open space/ local paths/ connections)
- Community purchase of Car Park is being pursued by East Loch Lomond Community Council

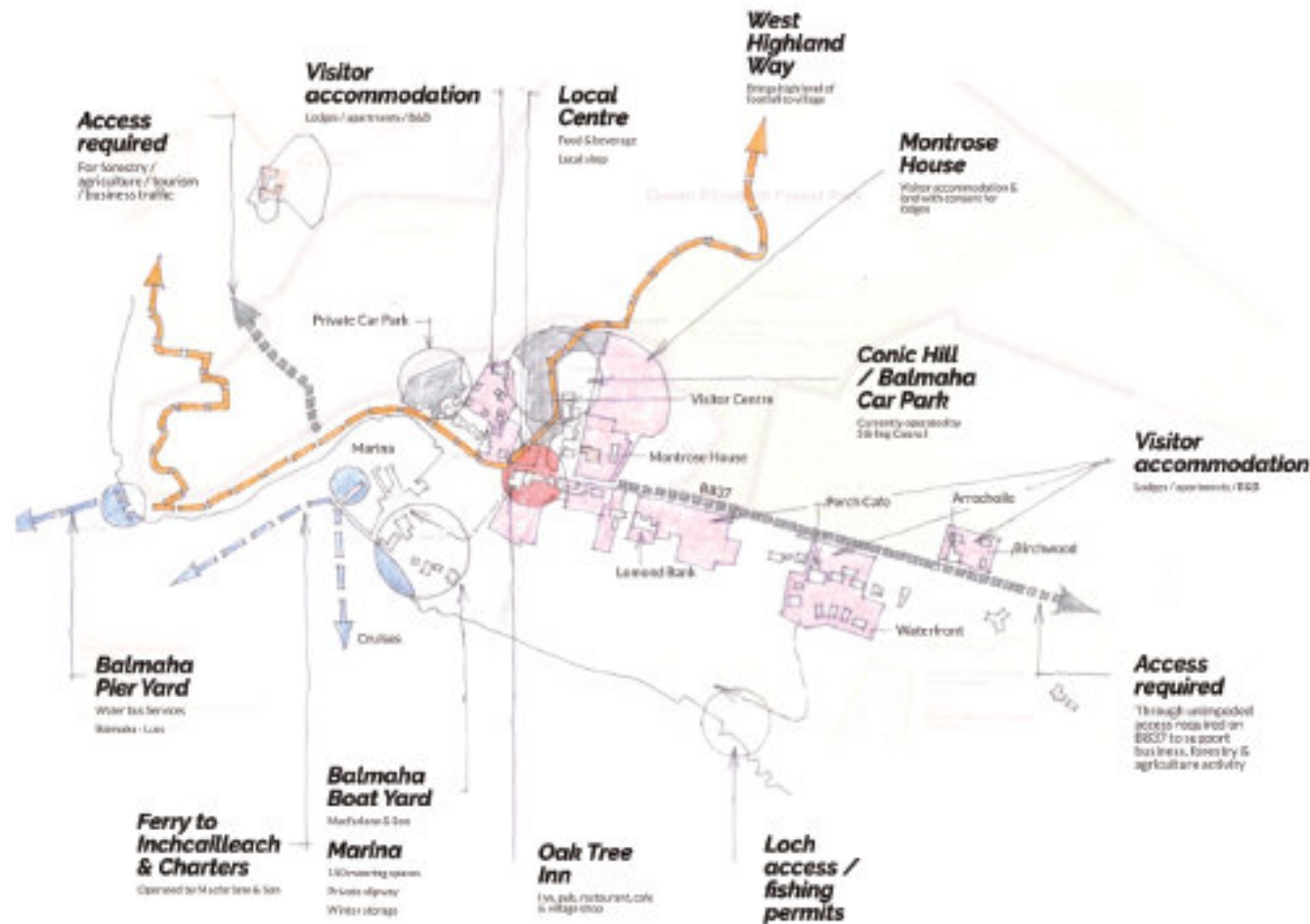
Place Assessment



Assessment & Engagement tells us

- The layout and scale of village facilities currently limits visitor capacity
- Open space provision and access to the loch are currently restricted
- The village core is traffic dominated and provides insufficient space for pedestrian & cycle movement
- Capacity for change is limited/ reliant on private sector ownership/ partnership

Local Economy / Enterprise Opportunities



Assessment & Engagement tells us

- Peak season demand exceeds capacity
- Congestion affects business access and quality of village experience
- Privately developed temporary car park (70 spaces) addresses current parking shortfall
- Visitor Watersports/ recreation conflict with marina moorings and ferries
- Improved public transport required for staff /community

Opportunities

Access

- Active Travel/Cycle Route – actions to complete connection into the village providing active travel route to Drymen identified
- Pier – access by boat bus/ cruises encouraged/developed to reduce car dependency (ref Sustainable Transport Plan) and offers Luss or Inchcailloch as a day excursion from the Balmaha base.

Facilities

- Loch Lomond & the Trossachs National Park Visitor Centre - on-site staff & resources based in Balmaha with capacity to provide visitor support/ events & services
- Inchcailloch Island – offers a unique and accessible visitor experience
- Village Hub - Accommodation/Inn/Shop/Café – offer an established destination with existing core of facilities

Community

- Community Council – ambitions to develop family attraction/ play facilities/ affordable homes within the village

Constraints

- Topography - steeply rising surrounding ground limits space inland & restricts access routes towards Rowardennan (Pass of Balmaha)

Loch Access

- Limited accessible shoreline – small village beach/slipway, provides insufficient access for visitor numbers
- Private Ownership – limits public access over larger areas of loch edge (Boat Yard/Oak Tree Inn/Hotels)
- Boat Yard –moorings conflict with water recreation/ public access

Capacity

- Limited village extents – public open space restricted to small village green & Tom Weir Memorial Garden
- Congestion & safety – busy road & narrow pavements conflict with high levels traffic & footfall
- Car parking – capacity insufficient at peak times, temporary privately developed car park (70/80 spaces) currently mitigates shortfall

Facilities

- No 24hr toilets – visitor centre toilets accessible within opening hours only
- Limited picnic area / play facilities – insufficient in scale/ quality for level of use

Balmaha Role & Development

Balmaha has the potential to be the main Visitor Destination for East Loch Lomond, complimenting Drymen as the East Loch Lomond Gateway. Balmaha needs to build on its place qualities to create a destination offering a diverse range of experiences, attractions and facilities with the capacity to meet visitor needs.

Developing the destination and communicating the opportunities of the settlement should form a key part of 'traffic demand management'/ actions to promote modal shift on East Loch Lomond, reducing the need for further vehicular movement on the C6 northwards and aligning traffic/ parking demand to essential users.

To achieve this Balmaha will need to offer:

- An attractive destination, with stronger offer and more things to do, of appeal to the visitor market
- Capacity to safely accommodate greater levels of footfall & disperse activity within the village and environs
- Increased permanent parking capacity to accommodate peak demand and/or park & ride service, and support local businesses
- Promoted walking, cycling, wheeling and public transport connectivity (Bus connection to Drymen/ cycling routes/ walking trails/ etc) and encourage incidental exploration – 'Discover Balmaha & Loch Lomond'
- Coordinated mechanisms (including education/ signage/ parking charges/ online booking) to discourage onward car travel and re-balance vehicular movement through demand management
- A range of locally appropriate visitor facilities
- An East Loch Lomond Shuttle offering public transport choices, developed over the medium term

Integrated Place Based Strategy

The Strategy adopts the core principle, that supporting inclusive access and promoting the enjoyment of the National Park should support access across all modes and promote and enable sustainable travel choices. High intensity visitor use areas require travel management to manage demand, avoid conflicts and discourage non-essential and unsustainable personal car access in areas/time periods of highest demand whilst facilitating local resident and business needs. The area suffers from high numbers of seasonal visitors in an area with limited transport services and choice.

Addressing travel demand requires either, a significant investment in new transport services and infrastructure, or re-setting demand by influencing the decisions that individuals make about travel choices, trips and mode of travel. Piloting Bus Shuttle Services has been explored with partners and a park-wide strategy (LL Modal Shift & Options Appraisal) is underway to investigate in detail the options for delivery of modal shift.

The strategy for East Loch Lomond needs to be pragmatic, align with community needs, reflect transition to Net Zero and the the Loch Lomond & the Trossachs National Park Authority Plan ambitions and offer early capacity for implementation.

The strategy for Balmaha therefore has two key parts:

- **Supporting Travel Demand Management**
Anticipating infrastructure requirements of a Sustainable Transport Plan in advance of findings of the Modal Shift & Options Appraisal
- **Destination Development**
Expanding Balmaha's role and capacity as a Visitor Destination

Supporting Travel Demand Management

Travel Demand Management (TDM) will seek to intervene, to reduce trips, promoting awareness of travel choice and incentivising positive behaviours over activities that are conflict with local capacity and have adverse impacts on other modes, local assets and residents. TDM seeks to encourage change in behaviours where other interventions may be challenging to implement or are unviable. Securing a change in behaviour in one of every 5 visitors has the potential to offer equivalent benefits to a 20% modal shift to public transport and may deliver wider place based benefits.

The Strategy for managing travel and transport within the East Loch Lomond Corridor is being developed through LL Modal Shift & Options Appraisal Study.

Masterplanning seeks to support anticipated outcomes through:

- Accommodating infrastructure for public transport solutions - bus laybys/ shelters & routes
- Developing active travel routes & connections/ facilities/ signage
 - Build Circular Exploratory 'Discover Loch Lomond & Balmaha' routes
 - Promote Hubs & Connected Active Travel Routes
 - Complete Balmaha-Drymen Cycleway & Local Loops
 - Improve accessibility/mobility for All
- Strengthening access to water bus transport
 - Promote Sustainable Travel Choices
 - Develop Visitor Information / Signage
 - Work with Local Community – Place Based Model
 - Strengthen visibility of water transport options
- Introducing village centre traffic management - road width reductions/ raised tables and junction reconfiguration and prioritisation
 - Support future Travel Management Plans e.g. support Seasonal Road Closure / Restricted Access to C6

Destination Development Strategy

Destination Development - seeks to expand Balmaha's capacity and role as a place to visit and spend time in, encouraging more visitors who arrive in East Loch Lomond to stay using the village as a base for leisure and recreation/ access to the loch. Masterplanning seeks to deliver:

- **Place Enhancement** – strengthen the character, appeal, accessibility and safety of the village core
 - Redefining the village core/ arrival
 - Prioritising pedestrian movement
 - Enhancing and connecting greenspace
- **Paths and Trails** – extending offer of things to do as a day trip destination
 - Targeting family use & accessibility
 - Encouraging exploration of the local area
 - Developing visitor experience – 'look-o-teries', views and outdoor interpretation
- **Active Travel Route** – providing safe cycle routes to explore the wider area
 - Completing the links for 'quiet' day-trip route to Drymen
- **Loch Access** – create new opportunities for loch-side recreation
 - Improve route and develop accessible path to Manse Bay
 - Improve Village connection to pier
- **Play and Recreation**
 - Expand the play offer
 - Promote as a base for exploration of Inchcailloch Island – via Boat Trip/own boat
- **Toilets/ other facilities**
 - Picnic areas/ stop over for long distance routes
 - 24 access toilets

Masterplan Projects

Projects

The following pages set out masterplan projects. These are structured geographically and thematically as:

- Village Core
- Paths & Trails
- Active Travel



Village core projects are focused on improving visitor capacity and quality of experience to build Balmaha's role as a destination

- **Village arrival**
 - Welcome, legibility of layout focused upon visitor centre hub with and ease of access & circulation for arrival on foot, bike, public transport, boat & car
- **Street & greenspace enhancements**
 - Place quality/ building village character with extended areas of quality greenspace
- **Car park capacity**
 - Identifying parking capacity with facilities for park and ride (if required)
- **Visitor facilities**
 - Toilets/ picnic area/ play areas/ public transport and cycle hubs
 - Overnight spaces for camper vans/ facilities for motor homes/ potable water/ waste discharge, etc.
- **Interpretative/ orientation signage**
 - Information & wayfinding encouraging exploration by foot/ bike/ public transport

Paths & trail network projects are focused on creating a stronger offer with more things to do, of dispersing activity within the village and environs and promoting Balmaha as a hub

- **Accessibility improvements**
 - Path upgrades with surfaces and widths which are inclusive and can be easily used by all i.e. wheelchair, pram, family friendly
 - Alternate routes which provide trails with level gradients suitable for all users
- **Look-o-teries**
 - Individually designed features located around the trail, each taking inspiration from the area's rich wildlife, and heritage.
 - Exciting and interesting locations along the trail networks
 - Locations to dwell and take time to enjoy wildlife and flora, history and heritage, vistas of land, water and sky
- **Picnic areas**
 - Wider connections offering loch side and open places to dwell, rest, relax and picnic
- **Visitor facilities**
 - Improved visitor facilities: toilets/ picnic area/ play areas/ public transport and cycle hubs - to support responsible behaviour by day visitors
- **Interpretative/ Orientation Signage**
 - Information & wayfinding encouraging exploration by foot
- **Connections, alternative routes & circular trails**
 - A wider offer of walking routes to support visits by different user groups e.g. families, day-trippers, long distance walkers
 - Encourage dispersal and mitigate hot-spots and areas of high pressure

Active travel network projects are focused on promoting the Balmaha hub for walking, cycling, wheeling and public transport connectivity (Bus connection to Drymen/ cycling routes/ walking trails/ etc) and encouraging incidental exploration.

- **Car free enjoyment of East Loch Lomond**
 - The Loch Lomond & the Trossachs National Park Authority is committed to Net Zero and securing greater access of visitors by sustainable travel modes
 - Options should be able to demonstrate/contribute to the Loch Lomond & the Trossachs National Park Authority meeting a contribution to the National Target of 20% reduction in car kilometres by 2030.
- **Connections, alternative routes & circular trails**
 - Complete Balmaha-Drymen Cycleway & Local Loops
 - Promote Hubs & Connected Active Travel Routes
 - Encourage dispersal and mitigate hot-spots and areas of high pressure
- **Improve accessibility/mobility for all**
- **Interpretative/ Orientation Signage**
 - Information & wayfinding encouraging exploration by foot/ bike/ public transport
 - Information to educate and encourage responsible use of shared paths to work with local communities

Village Core

Key actions within the village core are focused on improving visitor capacity and quality of experience

- Village Arrival
 - Welcome, legibility of layout focused upon visitor centre hub with ease of access & circulation for arrival on foot, bike, public transport, boat & car
- Street & Greenspace enhancements
 - Place quality/ building village character with extended areas of quality greenspace
- Car Park capacity
 - Identifying parking capacity with facilities for park and ride (if required)
- Visitor facilities
 - Toilets/ picnic area/ play areas/ public transport and cycle hubs
 - Overnight spaces for camper vans/ facilities for motor homes/ potable water/ waste discharge, etc.
- Interpretative/ Orientation Signage
 - Information & wayfinding encouraging exploration by foot/ bike/ public transport



OPPORTUNITY AREAS

Balmaha Bay

Enhancing loch access and visitor experience

- Enhanced access & connections
- Greenspace enhancements
- Visitor Facilities

Conic Car Park & Visitor Centre

Investment supporting quality and capacity of key village arrival point

- Enhanced access & connections:
- Greenspace enhancements:
- Visitor Facilities
- Signage and Interpretation
- Enhanced parking area including placemaking and organisation of spaces to improve accessibility

Village Centre

Better connecting Visitor Centre and arrival point to an enhanced village core

- Enhanced access & connections
- Greenspace enhancements
- Visitor Facilities

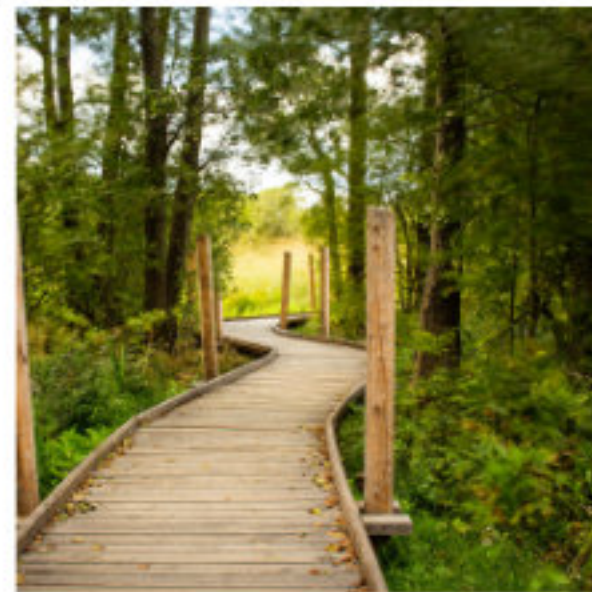




Historic bridge to Balmaha boatyard



Timber board walk strengthening village connection to the loch



Timber board walk strengthening village connection to the loch



Signage focused on enhancing place and strengthening connections to destinations



Timber board walk with viewing points and connection to existing viewpoint



Strengthened village walks and trails and widened footways

Balmaha Bay

OPPORTUNITY AREAS



Balmaha Bay

Enhancing loch access and visitor experience

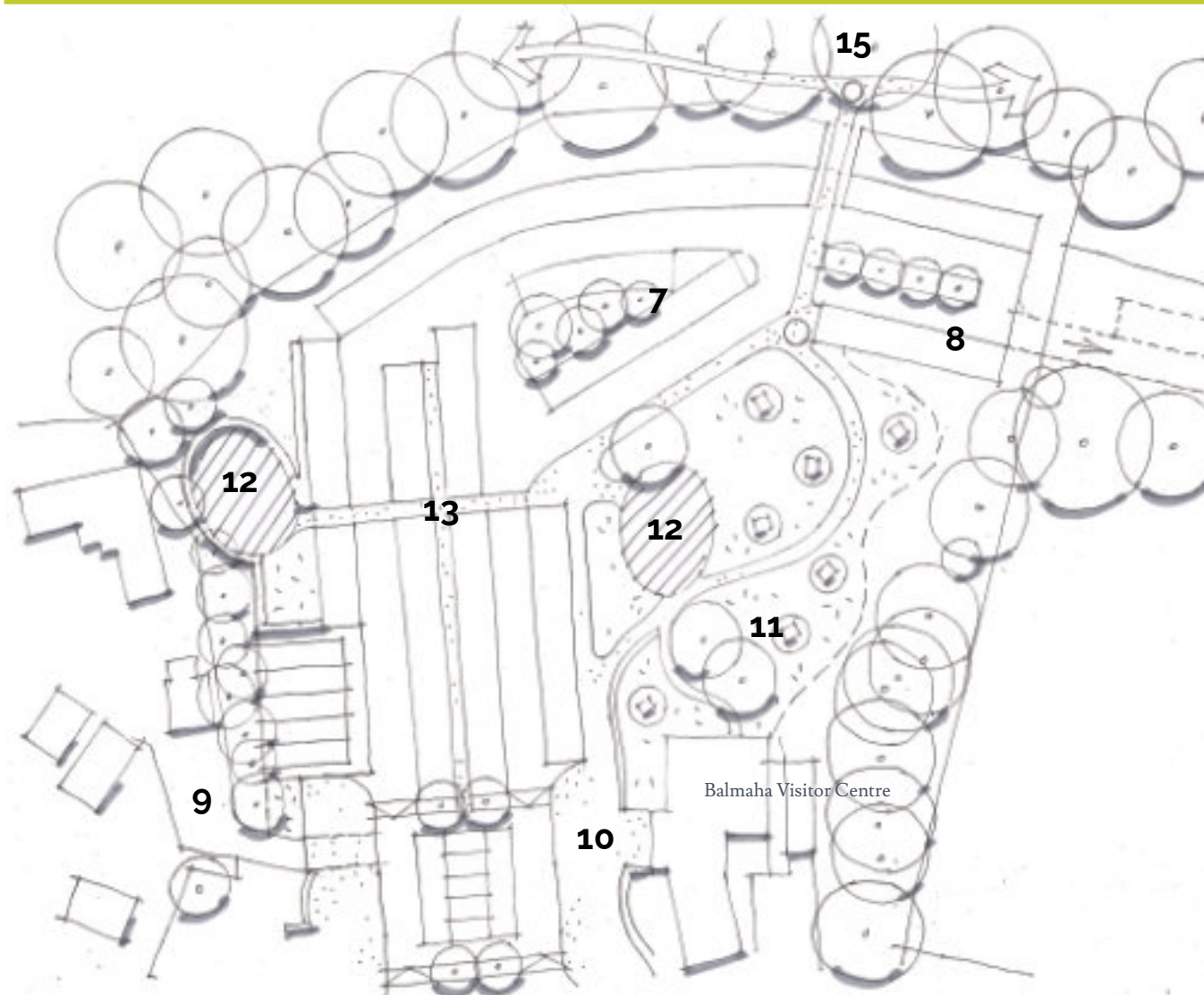
- **Enhanced access & connections**
 1. Width of south footway increased by road narrowing to increase capacity & safety/ West Highland Way use
 2. New boardwalk through marshy woodland gives new access to loch side/ viewing deck, extending capacity of Tom Weir garden
- **Greenspace enhancements**
 3. Management and maintenance of small area of woodland is achieved through improved access & active use
- **Visitor Facilities**
 4. West Highland Way route through village improved/ becomes safer
 5. Woodland trail & interpretation/ viewing added to village experience
 6. Clearance/ maintenance of loch edge around edge of bay gives better views and experience



Visitor centre frontage/ circulation space extended to increase capacity & use/ hub

Village Core

OPPORTUNITY AREAS



Conic Car Park & Visitor Centre

Investment supporting quality and capacity of key village arrival point

- **Enhanced access & connections:**

7. West Highland Way to/from Conic Hill to Visitor Centre/Village Centre
8. Car park road access extended in future to any potential development site or car park expansion area
9. To bunkhouse and potential lodges
10. Visitor Centre access and Village connection

- **Greenspace enhancements:**

11. Area north of visitor centre – improved quality and maintenance

- **Visitor Facilities**

12. Investment in play areas, both new and existing
13. Improved quality of picnic areas and car park environs/pedestrian circulation
14. Car park upgrade including placemaking improvements, organisation of spaces, spaces for camper vans/ motorhomes, and accessibility improvements

- **Signage and Interpretation**

15. Conic Arrival – information & wayfinding hub



Visitor centre frontage/ circulation space extended to increase capacity & use/ hub



Road resurfacing and junction reconfiguration to enhance village character



Village Green and Tom Weir garden better connected/ consolidated



New bus shelter supporting public transport operation



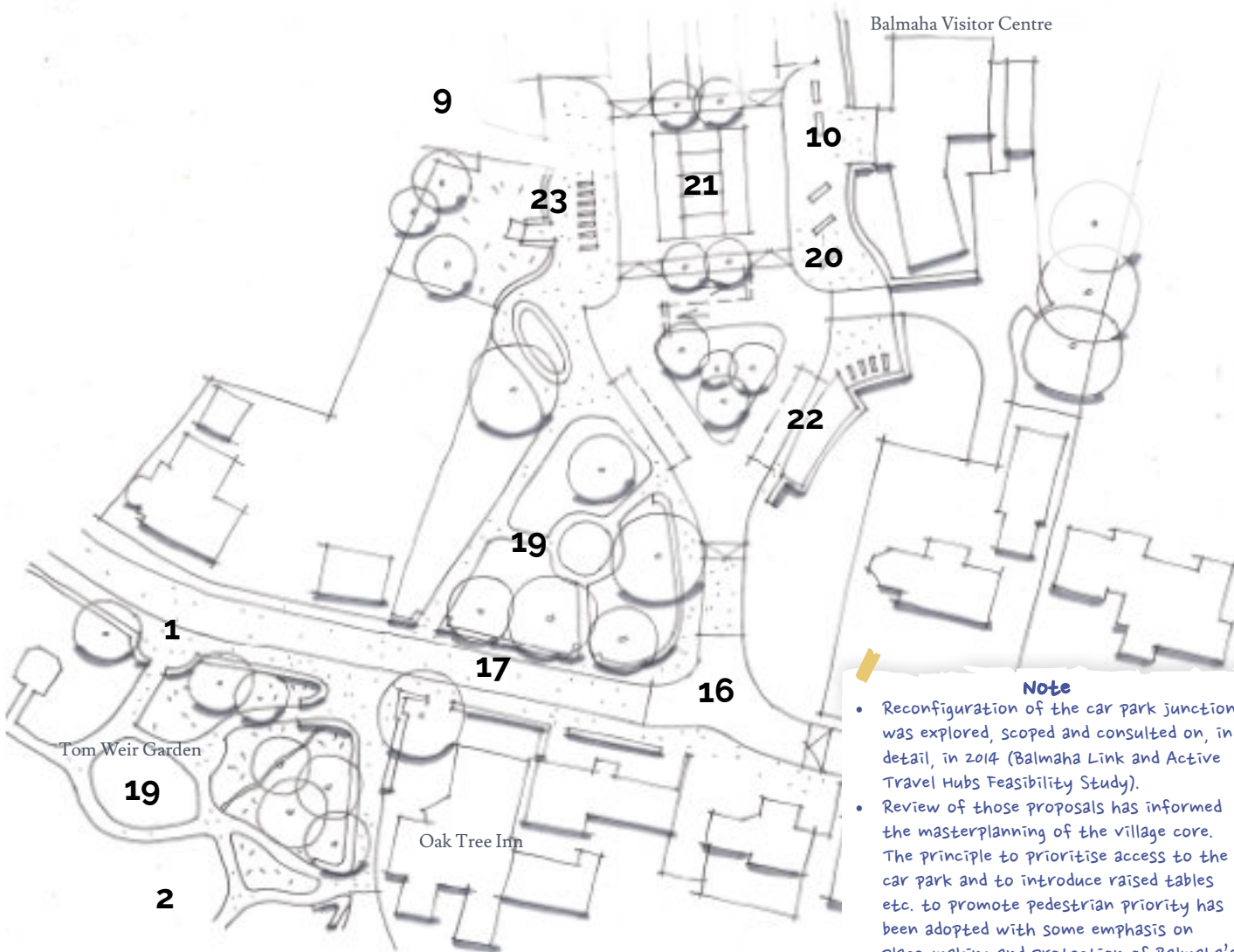
Junction reconfiguration and re-prioritisation to direct East Loch Lomond arrival to visitor centre car park



Junction reconfigured to discourage through traffic & improve pedestrian priority/safety

Village Core

OPPORTUNITY AREAS



Village Centre

Better connecting Visitor Centre and arrival point to an enhanced village core

- **Enhanced access & connections**
 - 16. B837/C6 road narrowed and junction reconfigured to discourage through traffic & improve pedestrian priority/safety
 - 17. Road resurfaced to further reduce traffic speed & enhance village character
 - 18. New space/entrance adjacent to Oak Tree giving new/ improved access to Tom Weir Garden
- **Greenspace enhancements**
 - 19. Village Green and Tom Weir garden better connected/ consolidated
- **Visitor Facilities**
 - 20. Visitor centre frontage/ circulation space extended to increase capacity & use/ hub
 - 21. Plaza/raised table improves pedestrian /event use & connection
 - 22. New bus shelter supporting public transport operation
 - 23. Cycle facilities/ seating/ disabled parking accommodated within central hub

Note

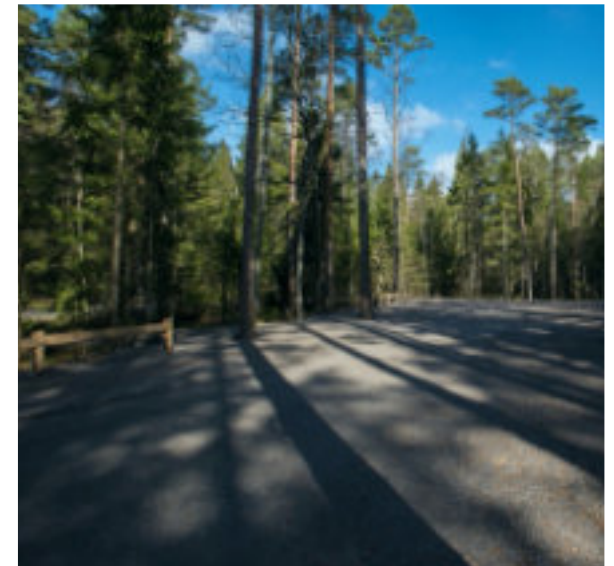
- Reconfiguration of the car park junction was explored, scoped and consulted on, in detail, in 2014 (Balmaha Link and Active Travel Hubs Feasibility Study).
- Review of those proposals has informed the masterplanning of the village core. The principle to prioritise access to the car park and to introduce raised tables etc. to promote pedestrian priority has been adopted with some emphasis on place-making and protection of Balmaha's special qualities of place



Orientation point with information, interpretative signage and wayfinding



New facilities to support bus stops and shelters, for toilet facilities and information hub



Car parking carefully fitted into regenerating woodland to retain existing tree cover and screening

Village Core

OPPORTUNITY AREAS

Capacity for Additional Car Parking (East)

This masterplan has sought to explore and establish the maximum capacity for parking in Balmaha. Opportunities to maximise parking capacity have been examined to:

- Inform the Sustainable Transport Strategy, which is exploring the roles of Drymen & Balmaha for park & ride / park & stride, and to support local businesses.
- Offer a fall-back position for if/ when temporary car parking (on private ground) is no longer available.
- Offer temporary mitigation until a fully operational Sustainable Transport system is in operation serving the East of the Loch providing a viable alternative to car travel
- Reduce need/demand for onward travel on C6 in support of future Sustainable Travel systems.

Assessment found that there is some limited opportunity to accommodate additional parking, achieved by back-filling area of proposed forestry clearance on lower slopes adjacent to B837. Careful integration within existing pockets of retained trees will mitigate visual impact and offer an attractive long-term opportunity for changing use/ role to overnight Motorhome/Campervans stays as successful Sustainable Transport options diminish need for car parking.

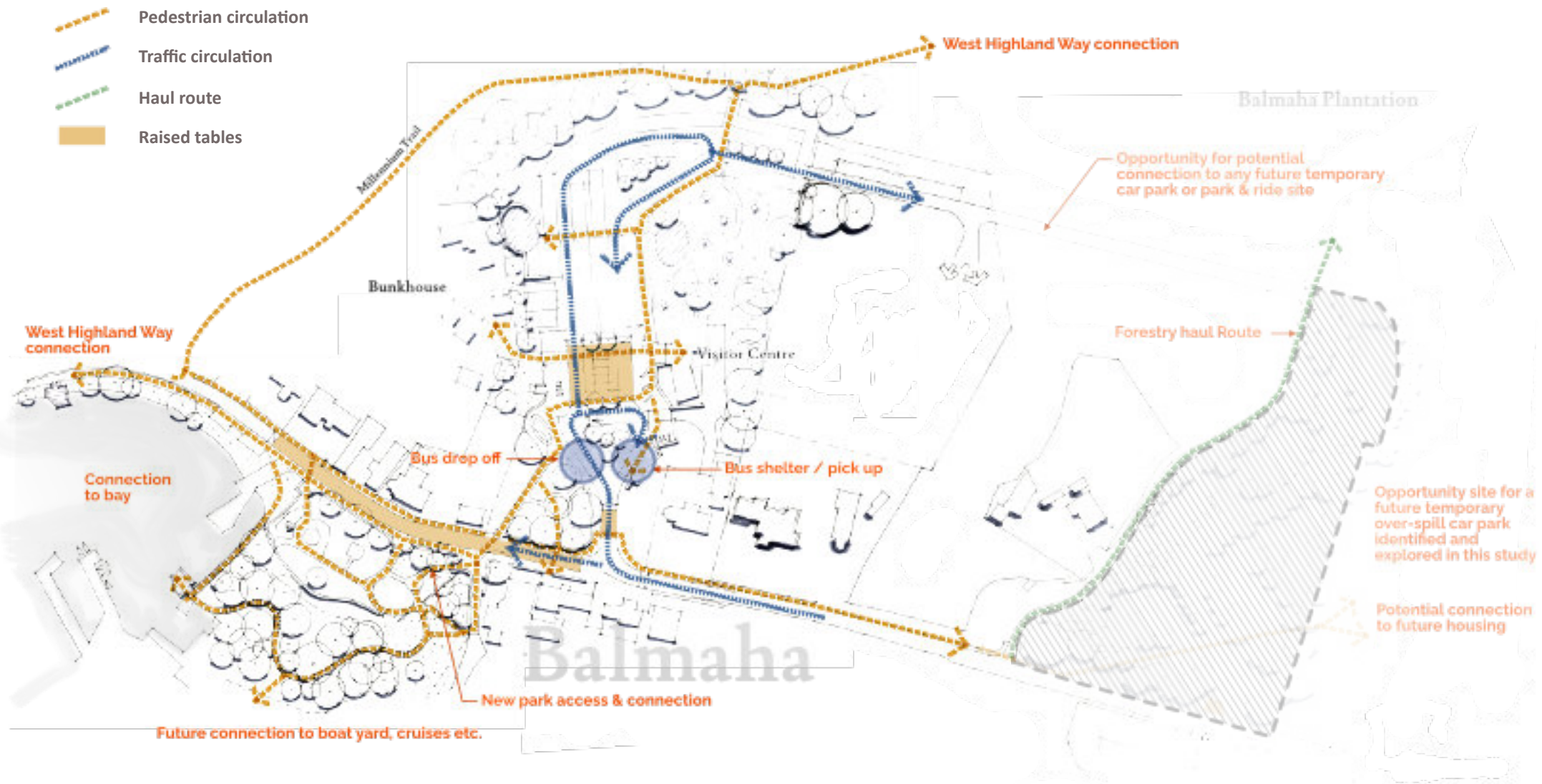
A potential extension could include:

- **Enhanced access & connections**
 1. New Entrance and access formed from B837 into F&LS site
 2. Existing Deer House access & Forest Haul Route retained
 3. New access connecting to Conic Hill car park (note presence of overhead cables)
 4. Paths connect to Village Core (west) and future development (east)
- **Greenspace enhancements**
 5. Car parking carefully fitted into regenerating woodland to retain existing tree cover and screening
 6. New frontage greenspace and planting to enhance Village boundary
- **Visitor Facilities**
 7. Capacity for up to c150 spaces added to village parking offering replacement for temporary parking and park & ride use
 8. Bus stops and shelters
 9. Additional 24hr toilet facilities
- **Signage and Interpretation**
 10. Information hub with orientation, wayfinding/things to do/ explore on foot



MASTERPLAN

VILLAGE ACCESS + CIRCULATION



Access and Circulation

The masterplan shows the principal village core circulation network, developed to manage traffic and better connect car parks to village core, pier and the surrounding path network. Key elements include:

Traffic Management

- changes to junction priority and road throttling for vehicular traffic on B 837 directs traffic right into the Conic Car park deter onward travel on C6
- road narrowing and raised table to reduce traffic speeds through village

Access to Public Transport

- Enhanced bus circulation/drop off layout and facilities in dedicated area at mouth of Conic car park
 - in/out at mouth of Conic Car Park (pre-extension) with new shelter/signage/seating
 - drop off pick up service extended via one way route through Conic Car park through extended car park (on completion) to bus layby/ shelter at mouth of new exit

Pedestrian Movement

- enhanced pedestrian priority with raised tables at busy circulation/crossing points to front of visitor centre (new plaza) /entrance to car parks and section of C6 through village core
- strengthening of West Highland Way Long Distance Path through village, new paths through car park crossings widened west footway through village core
- Extent access to Loch Shore adjacent to memorial Garden
- Strengthened connection to pier
- Connections to east

Forestry Haul Route

- Existing Deer House access & Forest Haul Route retained



Loch Lomond & Inchcailloch

Role

Balmaha is the first settlement in the East Loch Lomond area, when approached on land, with access to Loch Lomond. The settlement is located on a bay with a marina, slipway, pontoon and a pier.

Balmaha is a village which has an important role in providing access to the water. This role is part of the village's **appeal as a destination**.

- The boatyard and cruise companies offer day trips and excursions to destinations in East & West Loch Lomond
- The nearby Inchcailloch island is accessible only by boat and offers a day trip experience to visitors
- The marina and boatyard offer charters / berths / ferries / cruises

The marina, pontoon and pier connect Balmaha to the loch-side destinations in East and West Loch Lomond. The village is accessible from the water and through water transport is well connected to Luss, Inchcailloch, Rowardennan, and indirectly to other destination such as Balloch, Tarbet and Inversnaid. Balmaha benefits from its loch-side location and facilities and has a **role as hub supporting modal shift**.

Masterplan

The masterplan seeks to promote and develop Balmaha as a hub supporting modal shift. Water based transport represent an opportunity for modal shift in Seat Loch Lomond and can offer a car free method of onward visitor travel to the sites at Sallochy/ Cashel/ Milarrochy/ Rowardennan, which have capacity for visitors but are congested in the car parks and on the C6 road. Water transport can provide a method of exploring East Loch Lomond with out a private car which would support any restriction to access to the C6 road beyond Balmaha.

The masterplan projects seek to promote awareness of the water based transport through signage and orientation; visibility to the water, marina and pier; enhanced connection through paths, boardwalks and enhancement of the pedestrian connection to the pier.

Enhancing the destination and Inchcailloch

Retaining and dispersing more visitors within the village and nearby environs will support the local economy, enhance local amenity for residents and reduce need for onward visitor travel to the smaller more congested sites at Sallochy/ Milarrochy/ Rowardennan.

To do this Balmaha needs to promote access to the water and awareness of the excursion opportunities.

Inchcailloch offers an attractive location for loch access/leisure & recreation/ picnic and play which should be promoted.

Inchcailloch is one of the largest and highest islands on Loch Lomond, and is the nearest to Balmaha. The island is part of the Loch Lomond National Nature Reserve and is promoted as a place to visit from Balmaha. The island offers natural and cultural heritage; walks, places to picnic, places to camp, sandy beaches and accessed by boat both tranquillity and an exciting experience on the water.



Paths & Trails, and Active Travel

Balmaha is the primary destination and starting point for walkers setting out to hike the Conic. The short but strenuous path draws many visitors. Additionally the location of Balmaha on the West Highland Way make the village a hub for walkers.

Balmaha though offers great opportunity for additional walking experiences and better promotion and utilisation of the local paths. This strategy has the potential to encourage visitors to experience East Loch Lomond from Balmaha (and therefore mitigate visitor pressures, north of Balmaha on the C6 road).

The opportunity to develop a strong network of paths, trails and cycling routes, offering a variety of experiences with Balmaha at their core, has been explored.

Opportunity areas, potential **place improvements**, the opportunities delivered by simple and effective **signage** projects are highlighted; and new or improved **paths & trails**, and **active travel connections** are identified in the following pages.



Paths & Trails and Active Travel Masterplan

OVERVIEW



Paths & Trails

Accessible Manse Bay

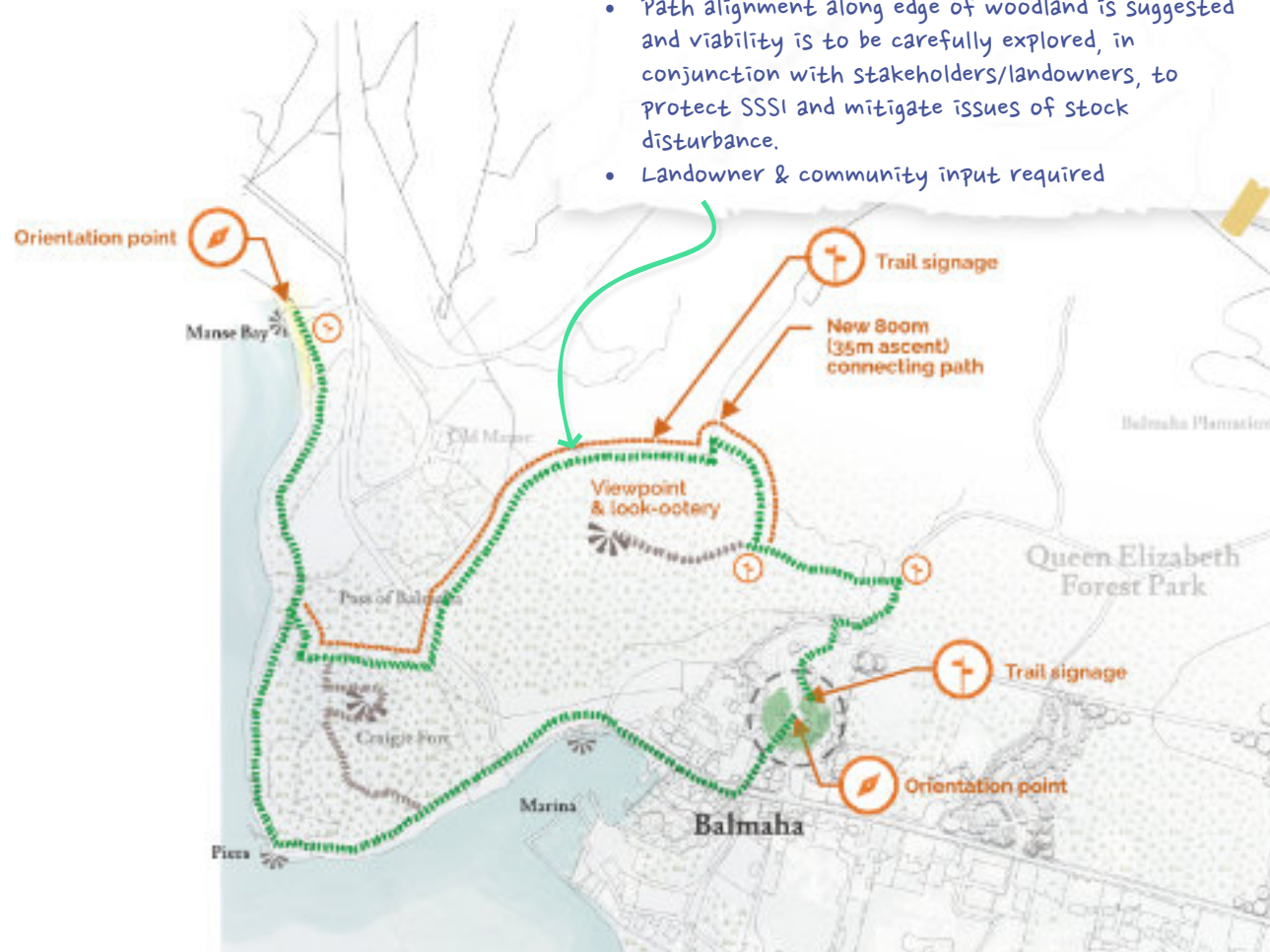


Accessibility improvements, promotion and signposting to existing attractive loch side destination

Path widening and surface improvements to make the route accessible to all

- **Pedestrianisation of Pier Road**
 - Strengthened connection to village, amenity of path
- **Look-o-oteries**
 - Viewpoint
 - water access / picnic spots
 - public art /interpretation
- **Picnic areas**
 - Loch side picnic areas offer family days out and provide the village with outdoor places to dwell
- **Signage**
 - Orientation/map signage; fingerpost / waymarker signage for wayfinding;
- **Vegetation clearance (safety & views)**

2 Manse Bay Circular Route



To consider

- Strategic link with potential to improve Balmaha offer & destination appeal.
- Path alignment along edge of woodland is suggested and viability is to be carefully explored, in conjunction with stakeholders/landowners, to protect SSSI and mitigate issues of stock disturbance.
- Landowner & community input required

Extension to Manse bay path to connect to Visitor centre, village core and footfall of Conic paths.

- **Circular route**
 - Connecting back to Balmaha to form circular route
- **Alternative route to bay**
- **Connection to village core**
 - Connecting visitor centre and Conic footfall
- **Land Management & Access**
 - Route alignment/fencing/ other measures to be carefully explored with landowners to provide public access with minimal disturbance/ nuisance to farming/land management.
- **Path**
 - New 800m (35m ascent) connecting path
 - Path widening and surface improvements to make accessible to all
 - Set within forest to ensure privacy of neighbouring sites and assist land management and pressures at boundaries
- **Picnic areas**
 - The sheltered woodland area offer Balmaha village outdoor spaces for visitors and families to enjoy, the path can be developed to include picnic areas to offer this amenity space
- **Road crossing**
 - Crossing at Pass of Balmaha with road safety to be considered

3 Millennium Village Trail



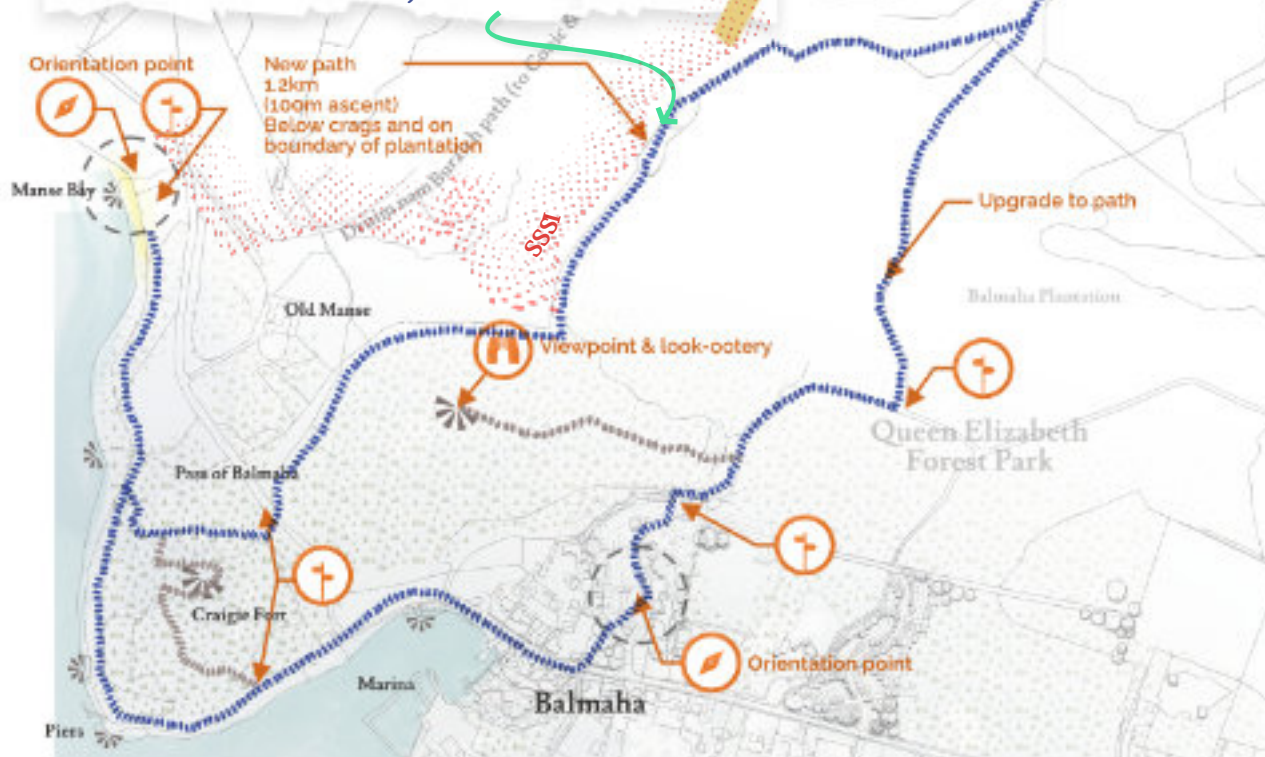
Place improvements to strengthen existing short trail

- **Path upgrades**
 - Path widening and surface improvements to make accessible to all
 - Improved connection to Village to strengthen circular route, and connection with village facilities
- **Place improvements**
 - Placemaking and dwell-able spaces at key junctions i.e. meetings of forest trail and village streets ; and visitor centre
- **Signage**
 - Orientation, wayfinding & interpretive signage

To consider

- Strategic link with potential to improve Balmaha offer & destination appeal.
- Opportunity to mitigate pressures on other conic path and limit use of informal Druim nam Buraich route through SSSI
- Path alignment along edge of woodland is suggested and viability is to be carefully explored, in conjunction with stakeholders/landowners, to protect SSSI and mitigate issues of stock disturbance.
- Landowner & community input required

Druim nam Buraich Alternative



Signing & promotion of existing path to enhance path network, provide alternative walks and encourage visitor dispersal

- **Extension to Manse bay path**
 - Connecting back to Balmaha to form circular route
 - Opportunity to walk a part of West Highland Way
- **Alternative to Conic long walk**
- **Alternative to informal Druim nam Buraich route through SSSI**
- **Land Management & Access**
 - Route alignment/fencing/ other measures to be carefully explored with landowners to provide public access with minimal disturbance/nuisance to farming/land management.
- **Path & upgrades**
 - New 1200m path
 - Path widening and surface improvements to make accessible to all
 - Set within forest to ensure privacy of neighbouring sites and assist land management and pressures at boundaries
- **Visitor dispersal**
 - Additional walking route for Conic visitors taking in Manse Bay, pier & Craigie Fort
- **Picnic areas**
 - The sheltered woodland area offer Balmaha village outdoor spaces for visitors and families to enjoy, the path can be developed to include picnic areas to offer this amenity space
- **Road crossing**
 - Crossing at Pass of Balmaha with road safety to be considered



Improvements to the active travel connection to Balmaha are required to encourage car free enjoyment of East Loch Lomond and Balmaha

The eastern village approach by active travel (walking, cycling & wheeling) is provided by a narrow roadside path way on the B837. The road is a 60mph speed limit and the footway reduces to less than 50cm width at many locations.

Opportunities to widen the footway to create a safe cycling and walking path are limited by the existing field boundaries and limited available verge-way.

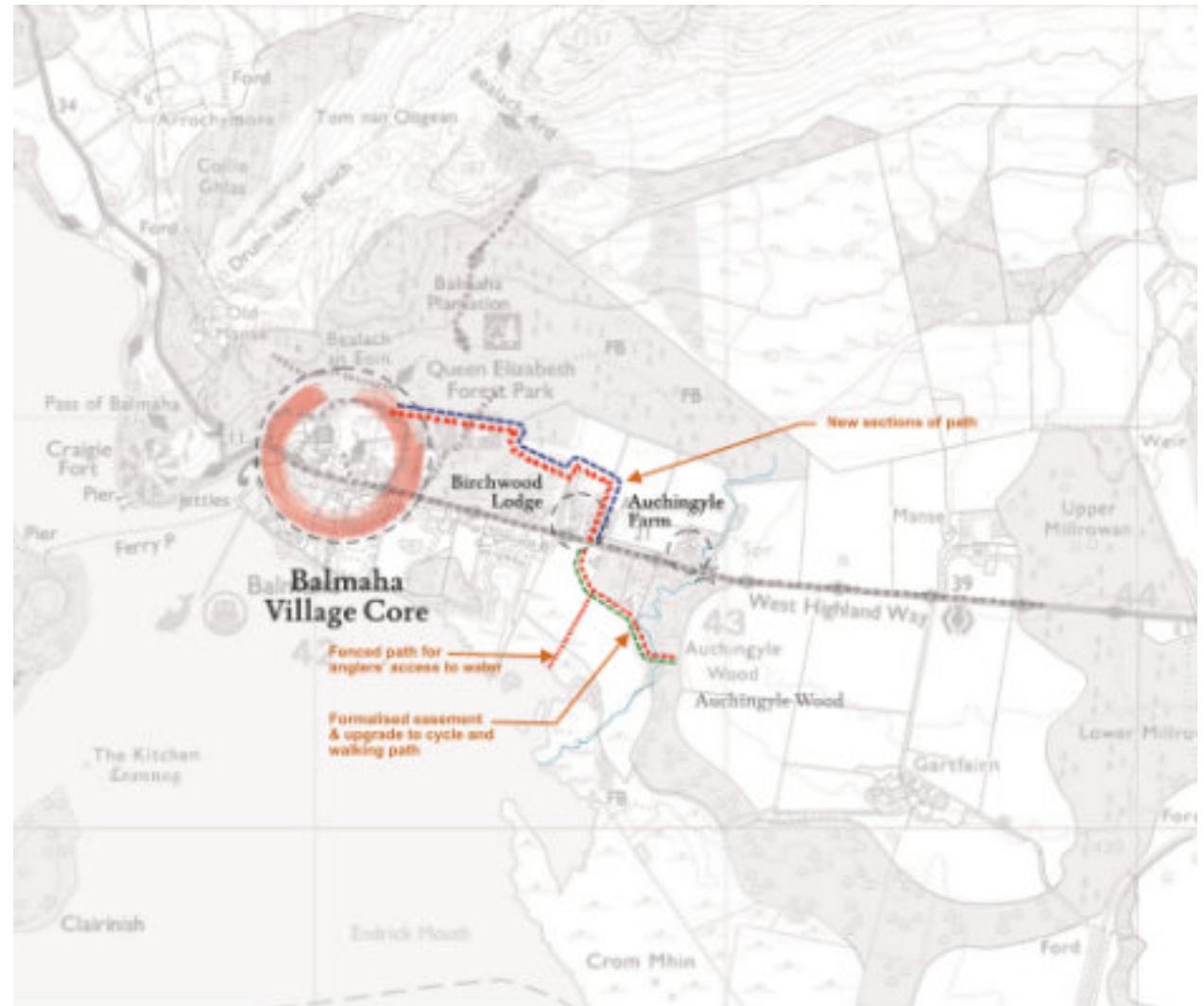
A bridge at Auchingyle Farm on the outskirts of Balmaha is a particular limit on available development widths.

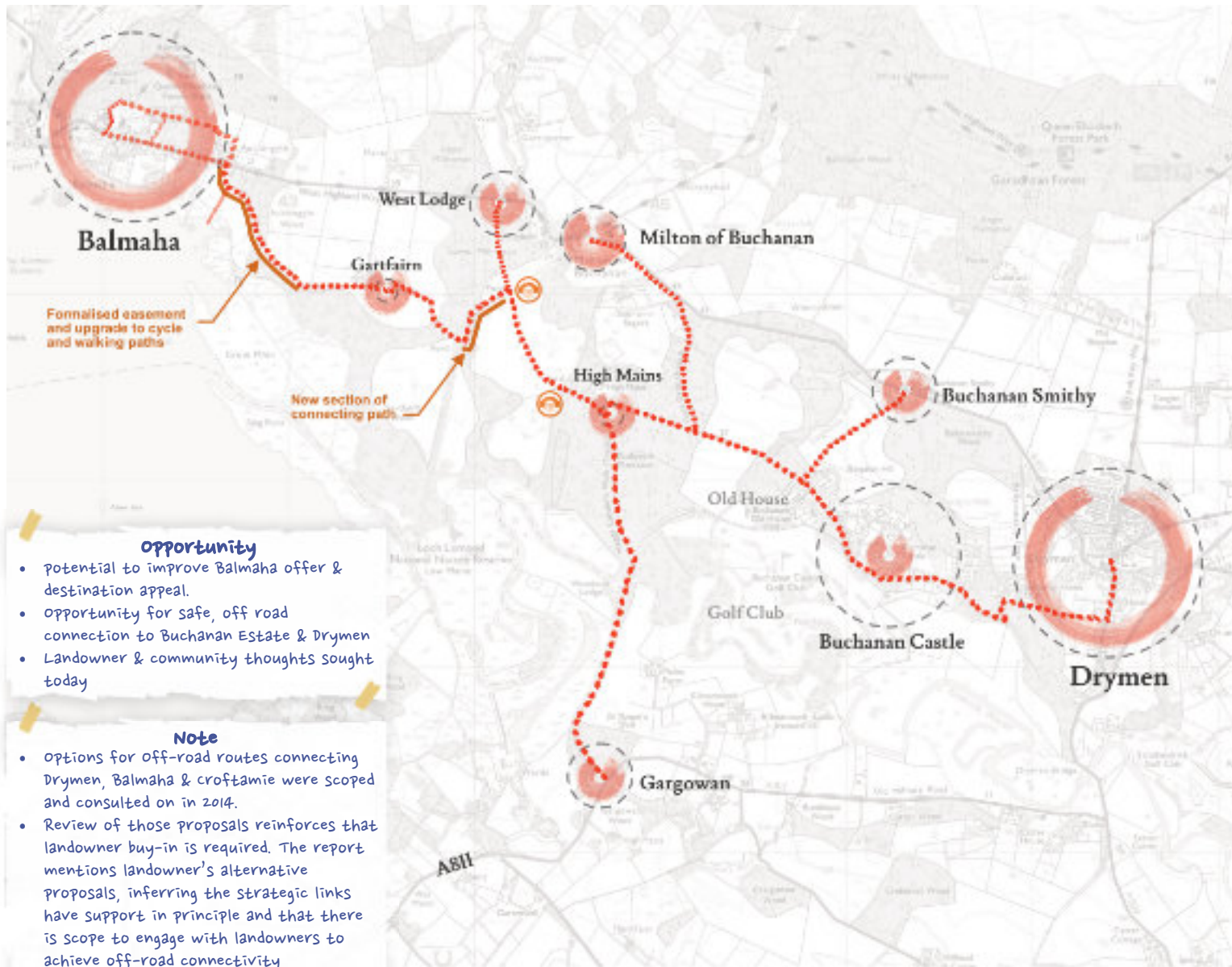


New off-road paths can be created by utilising existing forestry tracks and formalising existing easements, with limited creation of new connecting pathway.

Birchwood & Auchingyle wood path (1.6km)

- New 600m path along existing woodland break, with potential to coordinate with car park, lodge development, lodge and affordable housing projects.
- Connects to existing informal path to Auchingyle Wood at Birchwood Lodge, 600m upgrade to path would complete connection to Gartfairn paths
- Formalisation of existing easement with fenced anglers' route to the water to protect fields and assist land management





The paths through the Buchanan Castle estate are promoted as the active travel routes from Drymen to Balmaha. Drymen village square is a meeting point of the Rob Roy Way, the West Highland Way and the National Cycle Network 7 path – the Buchanan estate paths provide off-road connection to the estate and between Drymen, Milton of Buchanan, Buchanan smithy and south to Gargowan. The Milton of Buchanan to Balmaha active travel connection is on-road, with narrow paths and high speed limits.

A new off-road cycle & pedestrian connection from the Buchanan Castle Estate paths to Balmaha could be developed using the existing paths to High Mains cottage and the West Lodge, creating a connection to Gartfairn Cottage and connecting to the Balmaha village approach projects.

Projects

PROJECT BRIEFS



The following projects have been identified and are described and assessed in the following pages:

Village Core Projects

1. Balmaha Visitor Centre
2. Village Centre & Streetscape
3. Seasonal Car Parking Potential
4. Balmaha Bay

Paths & Trails

1. Accessible Manse Bay
2. Manse Bay circular
3. Millennium Village Trail
4. Druim nam Buraich Alternative

Active Travel: Walking & Cycling

1. Birchwood Lodge off-road path (north)
2. Auchingyle Wood connections (south)
3. Gartfairn – High Mains

Projects have been assessed in terms of :

- Impact
- Sustainability
- Complexity
- Timescale
- Order of cost

These criteria are used to assess RTIF eligibility

PROTECT BRIEF

Village Core: Village Centre, Visitor Centre & Conic Car Park

Balmaha Visitor Centre

Description / Brief

Visitor centre public realm enhancements and facilities for public transport, and improved pedestrian & active travel environment.

Impact - addressing visitor pressure/ strategic visitor management need/quality experience.

Sustainability - supporting responsible tourism and carbon conscious approach, community capacity building, partnership & collaboration.

Complexity - issues to address to secure project viability/ delivery (High = complex requirements)

	Project	Impact	Sustainability	Complexity	Timescale	Order of Cost
	Village Core: Village Centre, Visitor Centre & Conic Car Park	High	High	Moderate	Short	£285,000 - £335,000
1.	Visitor Centre Frontage & Car Park <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Visitor centre frontage/ circulation space extended to increase capacity & use/ hub <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Plaza/raised table improves pedestrian connection; allows event use West Highland Way to/from Conic Hill improved arrival & connection Public transport & active travel facilities <ul style="list-style-type: none"> New bus shelter supporting public transport operation Cycle facilities/ seating/ disabled parking accommodated within central hub 	Investment improves the visitor experience in Balmaha and enhances the destination appeal; improvements to arrivals and connections enhance the walking and active travel offer and encourage	Improved facilities for public transport supports a reduction in modal share of cars; support future changes to Traffic Demand Management; supports car free access to C6 destinations	Works to car parking, setting, and signage are low complexity. Junctions and carriageway works are medium complexity with Roads authority consenting.	Short:	£215,000 - £250,000
2.	Picnic facilities	Addresses limited opportunity for picnicking and			Short:	£10,000 - £15,000
3.	Play facilities <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Area north of visitor centre - improved quality & maintenance 	Family destination appeal enhancement with community and resident benefit			Short	£50,000 - £60,000
4.	Signage & interpretation	Supports connection and promotion of destinations	Supports & promotes active travel, water bus connection etc		Short	£10,000

Project Principles

- Prioritisation of pedestrian environment and connections
- Enhanced visitor centre and car park setting
- Enhanced facilities
- Promotion of East Loch Lomond arrival at Balmaha car park
- Support scaled-down use of C6

- Sensitive design of proposals within the development pattern and setting to contribute to 'sense of place' and take account of distinctive local character.
- Work with 'landscape setting' e.g. safeguarding trees, landscape features, water environment, access linkages and green infrastructure
- Character informed by rural standards, avoiding urban standards and materials

Project	Delivery agents	Dependencies	Quality principles	RTIF Eligibility /Project Activity
Village Core: Village Centre, Visitor Centre & Conic Car Park				RTIF Eligible • Sustainable Tourism Measure
Visitor Centre Frontage & Car Park	Stirling Council Community Development Trust & Council National Park Authority	Stirling Council buy-in Community Development Trust & Council engagement Sustainable Transport Study outcome	Sensitive design of proposals within the development pattern and setting to contribute to 'sense of place' and take account of distinctive local character. Work with 'landscape setting' e.g. safeguarding trees, landscape features, water environment, access linkages and green infrastructure Character informed by rural standards, avoiding urban standards and materials, such as tarmac street, lighting and concrete kerbs and aim to be as sensitive Place-first and sensitive street design ensuring place considerations primary to design for vehicle and cycle movement.	RTIF Eligible • Parking
Picnic facilities	Stirling Council National Park Authority	Impact dependant on other elements of project	Street furniture with robust and characterful design. Opportunity for brand and identity building for National Park with emphasis on quality of experience and fit with landscape setting	Not Eligible
Play facilities	Stirling Council National Park Authority	Impact dependant on other elements of project	Opportunity for brand and identity building for National Park with emphasis on quality play experience with attention to fit with landscape and village setting	Not Eligible
Signage & interpretation	Stirling Council National Park Authority	Impact dependant on other elements of project	Street furniture with robust and characterful design. Opportunity for brand and identity building for National Park with emphasis on quality of experience and fit with landscape setting	RTIF Eligible • Signage

PROJECT BRIEF

Village Core

Village Centre & Streetscape

Description / Brief

Public realm improvements to streetscape, and junction reconfiguration focussed on facilitating an improved pedestrian & active travel environment and promoting arrival at the Balmaha car park over onward travel on the C6 road.

Impact - addressing visitor pressure/ strategic visitor management need/quality experience.

Sustainability - supporting responsible tourism and carbon conscious approach, community capacity building, partnership & collaboration.

Complexity - issues to address to secure project viability/ delivery (High = complex requirements)

	Project	Impact	Sustainability	Complexity	Timescale	Order of Cost
	Village Centre	High	High	Moderate	Short	£245,000 - £285,000
1.	Junction reconfiguration, new prioritisation and street footway and surface improvements	High impact improvement to Connectivity within village core	Support prioritisation of C6 as low flow road and reduction in modal share of cars	Junctions and carriageway works are medium complexity with Roads authority consenting.	Short	£85,000 - £100,000
2.	B837/C6 road narrowing & footway improvement	Improvement to connectivity within village core and enchaind connection to Manse Bay and Pier	Supports active travel improvements; supports enhanced role of water bus	Junctions and carriageway works are medium complexity with Roads authority consenting.	Short	£140,000 - £165,000
3.	Signage & interpretation	Supports connection and promotion of destinations e.g. Pier & Pontoon with ferry connections, Manse Bay, Marina, Visitor Centre, Trails	Supports & promotes active travel, water bus connection etc		Short	£20,000

Project Principles

- Prioritisation of pedestrian environment and connections
- Enhanced village setting
- Enhanced connectivity in the village
- Promotion of East Loch Lomond arrival at Balmaha car park
- Support scaled-down use of C6
- Sensitive design of proposals within the development pattern and setting to contribute to 'sense of place' and take account of distinctive local character.
- Work with 'landscape setting' e.g. safeguarding trees, landscape features, water environment, access linkages and green infrastructure
- Character informed by rural standards, avoiding urban standards and materials

Project	Delivery agents	Dependencies	Quality principles	RTIF Eligibility /Project Activity
Village Centre				RTIF Eligible <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sustainable Tourism Measures
Junction reconfiguration, new prioritisation and street footway and surface improvements	Stirling Council National Park Authority	Community Development Trust & Council & business engagement Roads consents	Place-first and sensitive street design ensuring place considerations primary to design for vehicle and cycle movement.	Not Eligible <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Roads infrastructure
B837/C6 road narrowing & footway improvement	Stirling Council National Park Authority	Roads consents		Not Eligible <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Roads infrastructure
Signage & interpretation	Stirling Council National Park Authority	Impact dependant on other elements of project	Street furniture with robust and characterful design. Opportunity for brand and identity building for National Park with emphasis on quality of experience and fit with landscape setting	RTIF Eligible <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Signage

CASE STUDY

Case Study: Village Centre

Restalrig Village

Restalrig Village is a public realm and streetscape project which, through reconfiguration of the carriageway and junctions and careful use of materials, re-prioritised pedestrian movement in the village and helped to reduce the dominance of motor vehicles. The limited use of natural stone materials, careful introduction street furniture and prioritisation of the historic development pattern and setting contribute to Restalrig's 'sense of place' to enhance distinctive local character.



Balmaha's streetscape can be enhanced with public realm improvements to streetscape, and junction reconfiguration which could facilitate an improved pedestrian & active travel environment and promote arrival at the Balmaha car park over onward travel on the C6 road.



1	2	4	5
	3	6	7

1. Reconfiguration of the carriageway and introduction of natural stone detailing
2. Use of street furniture
3. Details inspired by Restalrig's history
4. New kerb edges
5. Junction resurfacing with promotion of pedestrian environs
6. Works with 'landscape setting' and safeguarding trees
7. Conservation approach taking account of the distinctive local character.

PROJECT BRIEF

Village Core

Balmaha Bay

Description / Brief

Path and pedestrian infrastructure projects focussed on strengthening the connection between village destinations (marina, pier, visitor centre, village core) & improving the sense of connection to the Loch.

Impact - addressing visitor pressure/ strategic visitor management need/quality experience.

Sustainability - supporting responsible tourism and carbon conscious approach, community capacity building, partnership & collaboration.

Complexity - issues to address to secure project viability/ delivery (High = complex requirements)

	Project	Impact	Sustainability	Complexity	Timescale	Order of Cost
	Balmaha Bay	High	High	Moderate	Short	£135,000 - £160,000
1.	Boardwalk	Moderate: Emphasising walkable connections from the village core to loch-side attractions, marina, Inchcailloch trips, and activities.	Low: Pedestrian and walking focussed project	Moderate complexity with landowner consent to negotiate and works at water's edge of increase complexity	Short	£85,000 - £100,000
2.	Boardwalk bay viewpoints <ul style="list-style-type: none"> New viewpoint with boardwalk connection Refurbishment of existing, facing, viewpoint/ look-ootery 	Moderate: Enhancement to boardwalk attraction	Low: Enhancement to boardwalk attraction	Moderate complexity with landowner consent to negotiate and works at water's edge of increase complexity	Medium	£40,000- £50,000
3.	Vegetation clearance	Moderate Visual connections to water and from village to pier promoted	Low	Low	Short	
4.	Signage & interpretation	Moderate	Moderate	Low	Short	£10,000

Project Principles

- Improved pedestrian environment
- Enhanced connections and paths (to bay, through and around village, to piers and Manse bay)
- Enhanced sense of connection to the water
- Promotion of Balmaha destinations e.g. Inchcailloch excursions
- Promotion of water based transport to support Balmaha's role as a hub

- Support for role of village as a transport hub
- Enhanced village setting
- Character informed by rural standards, avoiding urban standards and materials

Project	Delivery agents	Dependencies	Quality principles	RTIF Eligibility /Project Activity
Balmaha Bay				RTIF Eligible <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sustainable Tourism Measure
Boardwalk	Stirling Council National Park Authority	Water's edge and boardwalk location ownership & agreement Roads authority consenting (footway widening) Sustainable Transport Study outcomes		RTIF Eligible <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Path
Boardwalk bay viewpoints	Stirling Council National Park Authority	Impact dependant on other elements of project		RTIF Eligible <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Path
Vegetation clearance				Not Eligible <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Maintenance
Signage & interpretation				

CASE STUDY

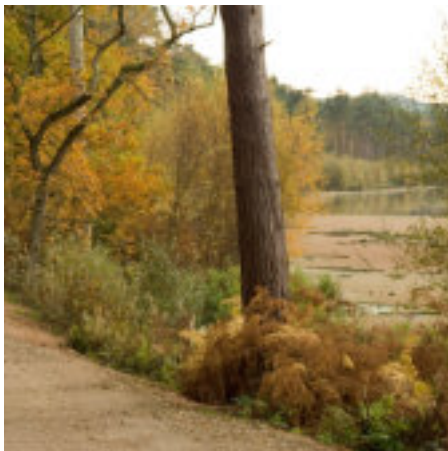
Case Study: Visitor Centre & Car Park

Delamere Forest

Delamere Forest is redevelopment project for a for Forestry England's Delamere Visitor Centre. The project delivered larger and improved toilet facilities which include a changing places facility, a staffed Visitor Welcome Point and redevelopment of the car park to meet increased capacity and and introduce new payment technologies. Reorganisation of car parking allowed events ready and pedestrian friendly setting for the visitor centre and distinct car parking and forest areas to cater for Horse boxes and cycling. Existing buildings were renovated to create a new bike hire & shop and a classroom operated by partners.



The Delamere Forest development is an exemplar in sensitive redevelopment of a forest park arrival location and visitor management. The scheme delivers additional capacity, enhanced visitor facility and developed the capacity and quality of setting for the visitor centre promoting the walking and pedestrian environment in a manner appropriate to how the Balmaha Visitor Centre externals should be enhanced



1	2	4	5
	3	6	7

1. Visitor Centre in pedestrianised setting catering for events and promoting activity
2. Timber play equipment
3. New facilities: toilets, cycle parking, information hub
4. Timber play equipment
5. Natural & incidental play / public art
6. New trails
7. High quality seating and picnic furniture

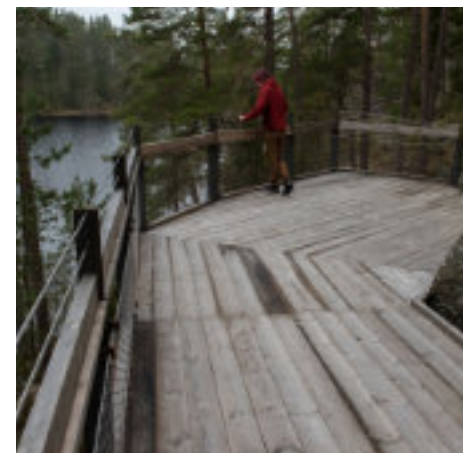
CASE STUDY

Case Study: Boardwalk & Water

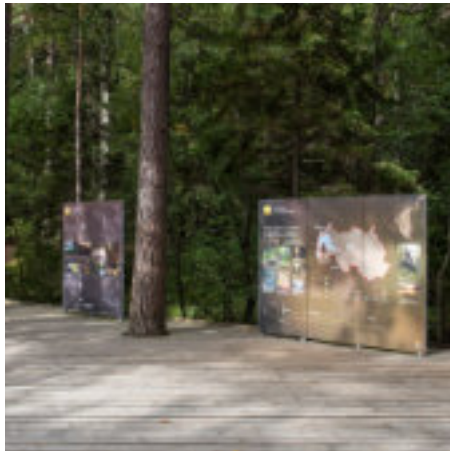
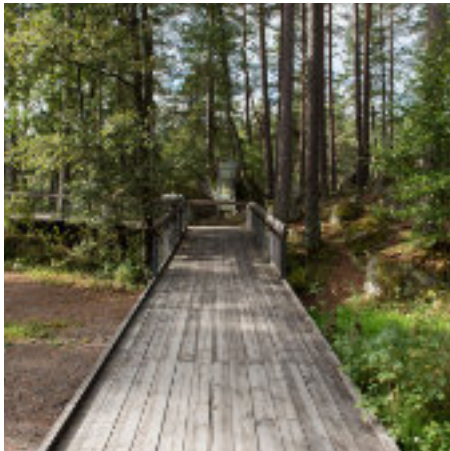
Tiveden National Park

The Tiveden National Park entrances project seeks to increase the accessibility of the National Park to all; allowing all visitors to explore the park, forest and water. Paths and trails are created which through the use of boardwalks and viewing points give level and even access routes through the forest trees, alongside and over water.

The design of the boardwalks and viewpoints is in keeping with the wider project's design principles: construction materials are sourced locally, and chose for durability and easy maintenance.



Tiveden gives a good illustration of how a boardwalk can be sensitively integrated amongst existing trees and how the village paths and trails could be enhanced in around Balmaha Bay.



1	2	4	5
	3	6	7

- 1. Tiveden boardwalk and water access
- 2. Boardwalk construction around existing trees and within root protection areas
- 3. Viewpoint with connection to the water
- 4. Boardwalk transition to on ground deck and paths
- 5. Information and orientation point
- 6. Raised boardwalk providing accessible routes over challenging topography
- 7. Boardwalk

PROJECT BRIEF

Paths & Trails

Accessible Manse Bay

Description / Brief

Path providing strengthened (accessible & inclusive) access to the Loch & Manse Bay; and connecting the village core to water-bus arrival point.

Impact - addressing visitor pressure/ strategic visitor management need/quality experience.

Sustainability - supporting responsible tourism and carbon conscious approach, community capacity building, partnership & collaboration.

Complexity - issues to address to secure project viability/ delivery (High = complex requirements)

	Project	Impact	Sustainability	Complexity	Timescale	Order of Cost
	Accessible Manse Bay	High	High	Moderate	Short	£150,000 - £175,000
1.	Village footway improvements (250m) Note: Common to 'Village Core' masterplan project, see 'Balmaha Bay: footway widening'	Moderate	Low	Moderate	Short	See Village Centre & Streetscape
2.	Paths <ul style="list-style-type: none">Path upgrade, new accessible path at headland from pier to footbridge 50mPath accessibility and surface upgrade 400m	High	High	High complexity with 50m section of works at water's edge and on rocky outcrop with challenging access and of increased technical complexity	Short	£30,000 - £45,000
3.	Pedestrianisation of Pier Road (300m) <ul style="list-style-type: none">Gate & junction resurface to signal pedestrian prioritisationPublic realm improvement to Pier plaza accessibility and surface upgrade 400m	Moderate	Moderate	Moderate complexity with landowner consent to negotiate and works at water's edge of increase complexity	Short	£50,000
4.	Signage & Orientation	Moderate	Low	Low	Short	£10,000
5.	Look-ooteries (4nr)				Medium	£50,000-£60,000
6.	Picnic furniture & seating				Short	£10,000

Project Principles

- Provide Balmaha with additional places to sight see and enjoy East Loch Lomond
- Develop network of walks with offer for all ages and abilities and differing lengths and experiences
- Deliver paths with non-urban character

- New path connections delivered with community and landowner engagement & participation to meet both tourism and community/business needs

<i>Project</i>	<i>Delivery agents</i>	<i>Dependencies</i>	<i>Quality principles</i>	<i>RTIF Eligibility /Project Activity</i>
Accessible Manse Bay				RTIF Eligible <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Sustainable Tourism Measure
Village footway improvements (250m)	Stirling Council	Roads consents		RTIF Eligible <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Path
Loch-side path: inclusiveness upgrade	Stirling Council National Park Authority			RTIF Eligible <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Path
Pedestrianisation of Pier Road (300m)	Stirling Council National Park Authority	Impact dependant on other elements of project		RTIF Eligible <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Path
Signage & Orientation				RTIF Eligible <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Signage
Place-making: look-ootheries & public art				RTIF Eligible <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Path
Picnic furniture & seating				Not eligible

PROJECT BRIEF

Paths & Trails

Manse Bay Circular

Description / Brief

Path and new route with connections to Pier, West Highland Way, Conic path and Manse Bay. Strengthen Balmaha destination appeal and provide opportunities for exploration

Impact - addressing visitor pressure/ strategic visitor management need/quality experience.

Sustainability - supporting responsible tourism and carbon conscious approach, community capacity building, partnership & collaboration.

Complexity - issues to address to secure project viability/ delivery (High = complex requirements)

	Project	Impact	Sustainability	Complexity	Timescale	Order of Cost
	Manse Bay Circular	High	High	Moderate	Medium	High
1.	Paths <ul style="list-style-type: none">Loch-side path & Pier Road: Note: This section of path is common to 'Accessible Manse Bay'New path (800m)Road crossing	Moderate	Low	Moderate Road crossing and land management increase complexity	Medium	£50,000 - £65,000
4.	Signage & Orientation	Moderate	Low	Low	Medium	£10,000
5.	Place-making: look-o-teries & public art	Moderate	Low	Low	Long	£15,000 - £25,000

Project Principles

- Provide Balmaha with additional places to sight see and enjoy East Loch Lomond
- Develop network of walks with offer for all ages and abilities and differing lengths and experiences
- Deliver paths with non-urban character

- New path connections delivered with community and landowner engagement & participation to meet both tourism and community/business needs

<i>Project</i>	<i>Delivery agents</i>	<i>Dependencies</i>	<i>Quality principles</i>	<i>RTIF Eligibility /Project Activity</i>
Manse Bay Circular				RTIF Eligible <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sustainable Tourism Measures
Paths	Stirling Council	Path alignment along edge of woodland is suggested and viability is to be carefully explored, in conjunction with stakeholders/landowners, to protect SSSI and mitigate issues of stock disturbance. Roads consents Accessible Manse Bay Project delivery		RTIF Eligible <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Path
Signage & Orientation		Impact dependant on other elements of project		RTIF Eligible <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Signage
Place-making: look-ooteries & public art		Impact dependant on other elements of project		RTIF Eligible <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Path

PROJECT BRIEF

Paths & Trails

Millennium Village Trail

Description / Brief

Improvements to existing path to strengthen accessibility and appeal

Impact - addressing visitor pressure/ strategic visitor management need/quality experience.

Sustainability - supporting responsible tourism and carbon conscious approach, community capacity building, partnership & collaboration.

Complexity - issues to address to secure project viability/ delivery (High = complex requirements)

	Project	Impact	Sustainability	Complexity	Timescale	Order of Cost
	Millennium Village Trail	High	High	Moderate	Medium	High
1.	Paths <ul style="list-style-type: none">Path upgrades and footway widening: Accessibility improvements Note: common to ‘Village Core’ masterplan project (250m)	Moderate	Low	Moderate	Medium	£5,000 - £25,000
2.	Signage & Orientation	Moderate	Low	Low	Medium	£10,000
3.	Place-making: look-ootery / boardwalk, Enhancement to viewpoint with public art and interpretation	Moderate	Low	Low	Long	£15,000

Project Principles

- Provide Balmaha with additional places to sight see and enjoy East Loch Lomond
- Develop network of walks with offer for all ages and abilities and differing lengths and experiences
- Deliver paths with non-urban character
- New path connections delivered with community and landowner engagement & participation to meet both tourism and community/business needs

<i>Project</i>	<i>Delivery agents</i>	<i>Dependencies</i>	<i>Quality principles</i>	<i>RTIF Eligibility /Project Activity</i>
Millennium Village Trail				RTIF Eligible <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sustainable Tourism Measures
Paths				RTIF Eligible <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Path
Signage & Orientation		Impact dependant on other elements of project		RTIF Eligible <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Signage
Place-making: look-ootery / boardwalk, Note: common to 'Balmaha Bay' masterplan projects		Impact dependant on other elements of project		RTIF Eligible <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Path

PROJECT BRIEF

Paths & Trails

Druim nam Buraich Alternative

Description / Brief

Path and new route with connections to Pier, West Highland Way, Conic path and Manse Bay. Strengthen Balmaha destination appeal and provide walking opportunities with longer routes and differing challenges. Provide alternative to Druim nam Buraich path to circumvent the SSSI area.

Impact - addressing visitor pressure/ strategic visitor management need/quality experience.

Sustainability - supporting responsible tourism and carbon conscious approach, community capacity building, partnership & collaboration.

Complexity - issues to address to secure project viability/ delivery (High = complex requirements)

	Project	Impact	Sustainability	Complexity	Timescale	Order of Cost
	Druim nam Buraich Alternative	High	High	Moderate	Medium	High
1.	Paths <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Loch-side path & Pier Road: Note: Common to 'Accessible Manse Bay' Druim nam Buraich alternative path: To Conic viewpoint (1200m) Note: 600m of which is common to 'Manse Bay Circular'. Conic path improvements: Existing path (750m) Connection to forest viewpoint (250m) Road crossing 	Moderate Investment improves the visitor experience in Balmaha and strengthens and promotes the walking connections to important destinations	Low Pedestrian and walking focused projects emphasising walk-able connection from the village core to loch-side attractions and activities. Improved connections facilitate use of the water as part of Sustainable Transport options (e.g. water-bus arrival/ ferry trips)	Moderate Delivery of new paths will require landowner engagement and support Road crossing and land management increase complexity	Medium/long Delivery of new paths, requiring land-owner consent, are longer term projects allowing for landowner participation, consultation and engagement.	£50,000 - £75,000
2.	Signage & Orientation	High	High	High complexity with 50m section of works at water's edge and on rocky outcrop with challenging access and of increased technical complexity	Medium - Long	£10,000
3.	Place-making: forest look-oootery	Moderate	Moderate	Moderate complexity with landowner consent to negotiate and works at water's edge of increase complexity	Short	£15,000

<i>Project Principles</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide Balmaha with additional places to sight see and enjoy East Loch Lomond • Develop network of walks with offer for all ages and abilities and differing lengths and experiences • Deliver paths with non-urban character 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • New path connections delivered with community and landowner engagement & participation to meet both tourism and community/business needs
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<i>Project</i>	<i>Delivery agents</i>	<i>Dependencies</i>	<i>Quality principles</i>	<i>RTIF Eligibility /Project Activity</i>
Druim nam Buraich Alternative				RTIF Eligible <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sustainable Tourism Measures
Paths	Stirling Council	Path alignment along edge of woodland is suggested and viability is to be carefully explored, in conjunction with stakeholders/landowners, to protect SSSI and mitigate issues of stock disturbance. Accessible Manse Bay project delivery		RTIF Eligible <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Path
Signage & Orientation	Stirling Council National Park Authority	Impact dependant on other elements of project		RTIF Eligible <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Signage
Place-making: forest look-ootery	Stirling Council National Park Authority	Impact dependant on other elements of project		RTIF Eligible <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Path

CASE STUDY

Case Study: Forest & Loch-side Paths & Trails

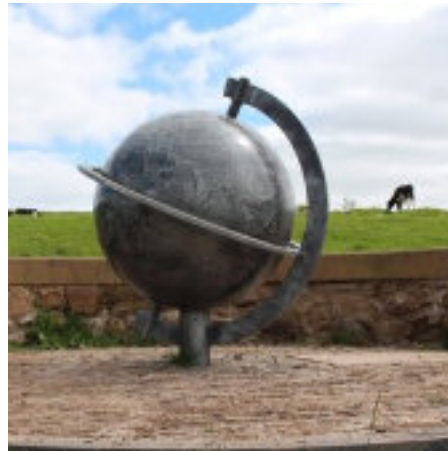
Semple Trail

Semple Trail is a walking route project delivered with its start and finish at the Castle Semple visitor Centre in Renfrewshire. The 8 mile route utilises quiet rural roads, farmland, and footways. The circular route offers loch side views, historic features, access to the woodland,

The success of the trails are in the accessibility that is provided, the trails were delivered to provide good accessibility to buggies and wheelchairs; and in the integration of look-o-otries which provide interpretation of the sites history and heritage, a new way to experience the landscape and have a functional role as places to sit , picnic or view the landscape.



1. Woodland trail at Semple
2. Look-ootery with views to the Loch
3. Look-ootery providing a place to sit and making the trail more accessible
4. Semple manage the landowner requirements to keep grazing cattle or sheep on the farm land at any time of year with information and through fencing
5. Public Art
6. Viewpoint and interpretation
7. Look-ootery Careful and sensitive intervention in the landscape setting



The Semple Trail approach to accessibility ensures that access to the landscape, access to the water and opportunities to discover, learn and have fun are offered to visitors of all ages and abilities. Balmaha's trail offer should seek to enhance its inclusiveness similarly.

The placemaking enhancements , which are functional interventions in that they introduce the necessary places to sit and rest required for accessibility, further enhance the success of the trail as a destination. the unique viewpoints ail, each offer a place to sit and discover important parts of the area's heritage



PROTECT BRIEF

Active Travel: Walking & Cycling

Balmaha - Drymen

Description / Brief

Off-road cycling and walking connection between Drymen and Balmaha with connection to wider national cycle network, long distance walking routes and the Buchanan Estate facilities.

Impact - addressing visitor pressure/ strategic visitor management need/quality experience.

Sustainability - supporting responsible tourism and carbon conscious approach, community capacity building, partnership & collaboration.

Complexity - issues to address to secure project viability/ delivery (High = complex requirements)

	Project	Impact	Sustainability	Complexity	Timescale	Order of Cost
	Active Travel Off Road Drymen to Balmaha connection	High An off-road walking and cycling connection is created between Drymen and Balmaha, encouraging car free enjoyment of East Loch Lomond and Balmaha. The connection benefits all connected destinations including Drymen, Balmaha, Milton of Buchanan, the Buchanan Castle Estate.	High Allows car free exploration of East Loch Lomond destinations Provides off road walking route (alternative to on-road West Highland Way) route Supports Park & Ride opportunities being explored as Sustainable Transport options: allows for Balmaha, Drymen, Buchanan Estate roles as arrival hubs.	Moderate Delivery of new paths will require landowner buy-in. Earlier study and workshops events suggest this can be achieved.	Medium - Long Delivery of new paths, requiring land-owner consent, are longer term projects allowing for landowner participation, consultation and engagement.	£575,000 - £675,000
1.	Birchwood Lodge, off-road path <ul style="list-style-type: none"> New path through existing woodland break: from Visitor Centre car park to village road via Birchwood Lodge (600m) 	High	High	Moderate		£150,000 - £175,000
2.	Auchingyle Wood connections south <ul style="list-style-type: none"> New path, formalising existing easement (200m) New path to edge of Auchingyle Wood (400m) New fenced path for anglers' access to water (300m) 	High	High	Moderate		£150,000 - £175,000
3.	Gartfairn – High Mains <ul style="list-style-type: none"> New connecting path (300m) Burn crossings (2nr - approx 10 & 13.5m) 	High	High	Moderate		£125,000 - £155,000
4.	Signage & Orientation	Moderate	Moderate			Incl. c. £25,000

Project Principles

- Creation of an entirely off-road (B837) walking & cycling connection from Drymen to Balmaha
- Character and utility focused on forest and rural environment type paths and cycle-way with non-urban character
- New path connection delivered with community and landowner

- engagement & participation meeting tourism and community/business needs
- New path connections delivered with community and landowner engagement & participation to meet both tourism and community/business needs

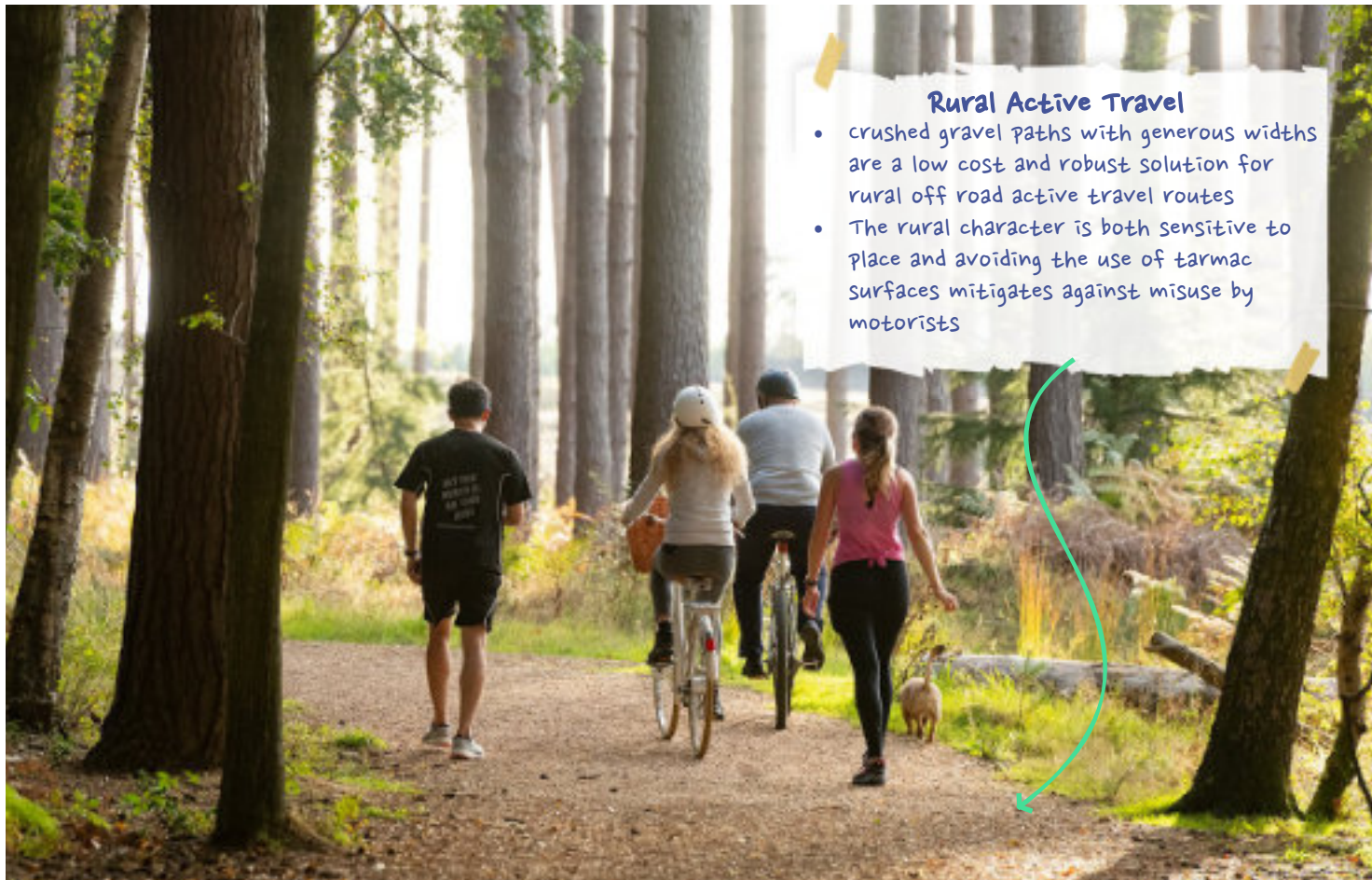
<i>Project</i>	<i>Delivery agents</i>	<i>Dependencies</i>	<i>Quality principles</i>	<i>RTIF Eligibility /Project Activity</i>
Active Travel Off Road Drymen to Balmaha connection	East Loch Community Council Drymen Community Development Trust Stirling Council National Park Authority Sustrans (potentially)	Landowner consents e.g. near Birchwood Lodge, near Auchingyle Farm, Auchingyle Wood, Montrose Estates; forest paths i.e. Forestry & Land Scotland		Not RTIF eligible • Site ownership Eligible for SUSTRANS funding
Birchwood Lodge, off-road path	As above	Landowner consents e.g. near Birchwood Lodge		
Auchingyle Wood connections south	As above	Landowner consents e.g. Montrose Estates		
Gartfairn – High Mains	As above	Landowner consents e.g. Montrose Estates		
Signage & Orientation	As above	Impact dependant on other elements of project		

CASE STUDY

Case Study: Rural Active Travel

Buckler's Forest

Buckler's Forest is a restoration project near Reading. The scheme created an interconnected network of trails and cycle routes through the forest. The paths were a combination of new and re purposed tracks, all opened up for free public access.



The Buckler's Forest scheme is a useful example of good practice in the sensitive creation of an off-road walking & cycling connections with a character and use of material which is appropriate to the forest and rural environment, and not adopting an urban character.



1. Shared path
2. Timber signage: robust and attractive
3. Shared path with new boundary planting to enhance setting
4. Buckler's Forest is enhanced with play areas integrated amongst the trees and trails
5. Places to dwell and viewpoint enhance the destination appeal
6. Picnic areas are created in attractive locations
7. Habitat creation

PROTECT BRIEF

Exploring Capacity

Car Parking & Facilities

Should Balmaha require an extension to parking as part of an approach to integrate Sustainable Transport systems, a site has been identified to provide capacity pending significant development. Capacity could be created through a temporary car park extension, with infrastructure to support immediate traffic management needs (until a Sustainable Transport System is up and running). Infrastructure (public transport shelters/routes) would be provided to support a potential park and ride model operating from alternative hubs if required.

Impact - addressing short term visitor pressure/ strategic visitor management need/quality experience.

Sustainability - supporting responsible tourism and carbon conscious approach, community capacity building, partnership & collaboration.

Complexity - issues to address to secure project viability/ delivery (High = complex requirements)

	<i>Project</i>	<i>Impact</i>	<i>Sustainability</i>	<i>Complexity</i>	<i>Timescale</i>	<i>Order of Cost</i>
	Temporary Extension & Infrastructure	High	High	Moderate	Medium	£855,000 - £995,000
1.	Car Park <ul style="list-style-type: none">Temporary car parking carefully fitted into regenerating woodland to retain existing tree cover and screeningExisting Deer House access & Forest Haul Route retained (separate to parking access)New frontage greenspace and planting to enhance village boundary	High impact improvement to village capacity: protects village street from in-proper parking during peak demand within village core. Creates	Support prioritisation of C6 as low flow road and reduction in modal share of cars Car parking provision allows restriction to onward traffic beyond Balmaha	Works to car parking, setting , and signage are low complexity	Medium	£675,000 - £790,000
2.	Visitor Facilities <ul style="list-style-type: none">Additional 24h hour toilet facilitiesMotorhome FacilitiesBus stops and shelters	Supports changes to Traffic Demand Management on C6	Facilities support public transport or a Park & Stride model.	Junctions and carriageway works are medium complexity with Roads authority consenting.	Medium	£150,000 - £175,000
3.	Signage & orientation <ul style="list-style-type: none">Information hub with orientation, wayfinding/ things to do/ explore on foot	Supports connection and promotion of destinations	Supports & promotes active travel, water bus connection etc		Medium	£30,000

Project Principles

- Infrastructure to support immediate seasonal need to increase parking capacity until sustainable transport strategy fully operational
- Increase short term visitor parking capacity in Balmaha to mitigate C6 road congestion
- Sensitive integration of new facilities within existing woodland / formation of long term motor-home facilities
- Support for role of village as a visitor hub
- Provision of needed enhanced visitor facilities e.g. toilets/ showers/waste disposal
- Development of pedestrian environment and connections
- Work with 'landscape setting' e.g. safeguarding trees, landscape features, water environment, access linkages and green infrastructure
- Character informed by rural standards, avoiding urban standards and materials

Project	Delivery agents	Dependencies	Quality principles	RTIF Eligibility /Project Activity
Car Park Extension				RTIF Eligible <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sustainable Tourism Measures
Car Park	National Park Authority Stirling Council Community Trust Forestry & Land Scotland	Community Development Trust & Council & business engagement Roads consents for access Forestry & Land Scotland support & ownership agreement	Place-first and sensitive integration of parking in existing woodland. Design ensuring place considerations primary to design for vehicle movement. Sensitive approach to destination arrival point (car park), information hub etc is an opportunity for brand and identity building for National Park with emphasis on quality of experience and fit with landscape setting	RTIF Eligible <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Parking / • Motorhome Facilities
Visitor Facilities	Stirling Council National Park Authority	Sustainable Transport Study outcomes	Information hub, shelter buildings etc is an opportunity for brand and identity building for National Park	RTIF Eligible <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Toilets • Recycling points
Signage & orientation	Stirling Council National Park Authority	Impact dependant on other elements of project	Street furniture with robust and characterful design. Opportunity for brand and identity building for National Park with emphasis on quality of experience and fit with landscape setting	RTIF Eligible <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Signage

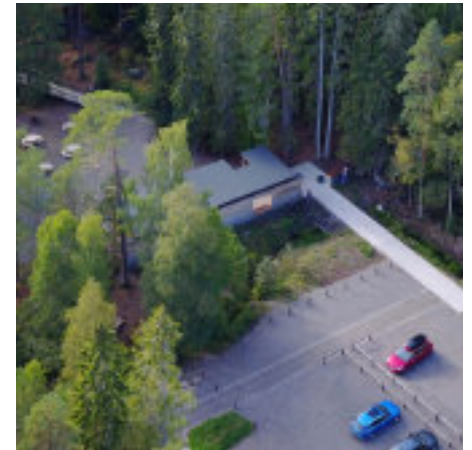
CASE STUDY

Case Study: Forest Car Park & Facilities

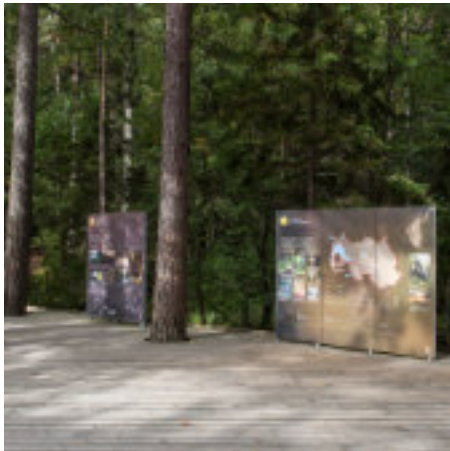
Tiveden National Park

A project delivering 3 new entrances to Tiveden National Park, designed to work within a variety of natural habitats, these gateways gently guide visitors and celebrate arrival in the National Park with minimal impact to the landscape setting.

The new entrance increases Tiveden's accessibility to all; allowing visitors to explore the park by foot having parked and found orientation. The entrance points provide car parks and associated facilities including toilets, information & orientation hubs and picnic areas.



Tiveden gives a good illustration of how visitor infrastructure can be sensitively integrated into the Balmaha's village environment to avoid an overly urbanised outcome.



1	2	4	5
	3	6	

1. Tiveden Car Park Facilities: with toilets and an information point
2. Car park, facilities building and picnic area sensitively located amongst mature trees
3. Picnic area and fire pit
4. Orientation point and deck
5. Timber detailing
6. Orientation point and car park screening



Order of cost

Budget costs are estimated as follows. A range is given to address the indicative nature of proposals at this time. Costs shown are for capital works and exclude all professional fees , overhead costs and VAT.

Short term projects account for an investment of between £0.815m - £0.955m - ex VAT anticipated, spread over a 5yr+ period.

- Visitor Centre & Conic Car Park
- Village Centre & street
- Balmaha Bay
- Accessible Manse Bay

Short term projects are highlighted in the following table. These are early action projects identified as priorities. These projects are RTIF eligible.

Medium to long term projects account for an investment of between £0.815m - £0.955m - ex VAT anticipated, spread over a 10yr+ period.

A total investment of between £1.415m - £1.705m - ex VAT can be anticipated.

*Note that the temporary car park project is at an early stage of development (identifying a potential site and exploring capacity).

<i>Project</i>	<i>Cost Low</i>	<i>Cost High</i>
<i>Village Core Projects</i>		
Visitor Centre & Conic Car Park	£285,000	£335,000
Village Centre & Street	£245,000	£285,000
Balmaha Bay	£135,000	£160,000
Sub Total	£665,000	£780,000
<i>Paths & Trails</i>		
Accessible Manse Bay	£150,000	£175,000
Manse Bay circular	£75,000	£100,000
Millennium Village Trail	£25,000	£50,000
Druim nam Buraich Alternative	£75,000	£100,000
Sub Total	£325,000	£425,000
<i>Active Travel: Walking & Cycling</i>		
Birchwood Lodge, off-road path	£150,000	£175,000
Auchingyle Wood connections south	£150,000	£175,000
Gartfairn – High Mains	£125,000	£150,000
Sub Total	£425,000	£500,000
Total (ex VAT)	£1,415,000	£1,705,000
<i>Exploring Capacity</i>		
Potential Temporary Car Parking & Facilities *	£855,000	£995,000

Conclusion

This study set out to explore the capacity for Balmaha to play a greater role in supporting sustainable visitor tourism in East Loch Lomond seeking, in particular, to identify opportunity to mitigate the overcrowding and traffic congestion that occurs on the minor road (particularly C6 northwards of Balmaha) during peak season.

The East Loch Lomond STID Study March 2022 established the opportunity for Balmaha to strengthen its role as a hub for visitors built around its current provision of accommodation/ parking/facilities/information centre/local centre and position on loch and the West Highland Way. It also suggested opportunity to explore its future role in supporting modal shift to sustainable travel.

These issues have been explored and examined within the following context.

Firstly, it is noted that the extremes of overcrowding, anti-social behaviour and congestion, as a result of travel restrictions during the pandemic, are reduced post Covid. However, there remains need and we have identified opportunity for Balmaha to contribute towards delivery of more permanent and manageable solutions to the peak season visitor management issues of ELL.

Secondly, this study is being concluded in advance of the Sustainable Transport Strategy Study, which will be critical in determining park wide approaches and solutions to achieving modal shift. The detail of how the Sustainable Transport Strategy addresses the needs of the East side of the loch remains to be determined, however need and opportunity to better provide for shuttle bus/water bus/ active travel access/ and support visitor facilities set out within this study will improve the existing situation and give support to future actions.

Building Role & Capacity

This masterplan concludes that the future role for Balmaha should be twofold, recognising and developing the Village **as an arrival hub**, the first point of significant contact with the Loch; in addition to giving particular focus to **enhancing as a destination** extending place appeal and things to do.

Enhancing as a Destination - retaining and dispersing more visitors within the village and nearby environs will support the local economy, enhance local amenity for residents and reduce need for onward visitor travel to the smaller more congested sites at Sallochy/ Milarrochy/ Rowardennan.

To do this Balmaha needs to:

- increase visitor capacity within village environs, by increasing accessible open space/ picnic areas/ widening pavements to increase local amenity and safety (Village Core enhancements)
- offer attractive locations for loch access/ leisure & recreation/ picnic and play
- provide new connections to loch/forest/ Inchcailloch for walking/ cycling/ watersports
- provide enhanced visitor facilities toilets, shelter, wayfinding and interpretive signage

In consideration of developing as a hub supporting Modal Shift – increasing parking capacity to retain more cars and reduce onward travel/ (park & stride) offer capacity for park and ride shuttle bus access and operation,

Capacity to support modal shift includes:

- opportunity to sensitively accommodate additional parking, up to 150 new spaces, within village environs (FLS site), offsetting future loss of temporary car parking (capacity 70-80 spaces) to give nett overall gain of +70-80 spaces
- provision of EV/EBike charge points
- Village Core/ Visitor Centre reconfiguration to accommodate improved public access/ shelter/public transport/shuttle bus access/ circulation/capacity
- Village Centre Traffic calming/ junction reconfiguration to discourage C6 visitor traffic
- Deliver missing links to secure fully connected off-road active travel route to Drymen
- Improve village – pier connection supporting water bus accessibility and use.

Masterplan

The proposed masterplan provides a long-term plan for how the village can be developed to better accommodate the pressures and needs of tourism, businesses and the local community. With a total value of required investment at £2.850M the masterplan is made up of a number of projects, large (£995,000), medium (approx. £175,000 -£250,000) and small, (£50,000 - £75,000) each of which have a role in building the destination, capacity, access and connections required for long term success. The masterplan sets out projects and inter-relationships to coordinate the work of all interested parties (LLTNPA/FLS/SC/Community/ Landowner/Business interests) to support progressive implementation towards a common aim over time as opportunity and funding streams become available.

It also offers information on place capacity and opportunities to inform the Sustainable Transport Strategy work.

Next Steps & Recommendations

Next Steps & Recommendations

Delivery of the masterplan will require securement of project funding, design development through stakeholder/community engagement, partnership/legal agreements for development (as appropriate), consenting and contract procurement. Implementation will be via a mix of planned projects and response to opportunities as they arise.

Early Actions

A number of early actions are recommended to facilitate advancement of projects:

- Assess findings of Sustainable Transport Strategy and timescales for implementation within East to determine need/viability of temporary car park at Balmaha.
- Progress exploration of temporary car park expansion with Forestry & Land Scotland, linked into planned forestry activities, seek to establish timescale/legal agreements/preparatory works etc (RTIF Eligible Activity- temporary car park assess timescale with those above to determine

value in proceeding.

- Work with Landowners/ East Loch Lomond Community Development Trust to pursue/reopen application for Sustrans funding to complete connections to Drymen; with a focus on development of off-road route options which, it has been established, have landowner support

RTIF Early Action

- Make RTIF applications for prioritised early actions projects focusing on:
 - Visitor Centre & Conic Car Park
 - Village Centre & street
 - Balmaha Bay
 - Accessible Manse Bay

Prepared by Ironside Farrar
on behalf of
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