

THE HIGHLAND COUNCIL

NAIRN AND BADENOCH AND STRATHSPEY AREA COMMITTEE 25 SEPTEMBER 2014

Agenda Item	11.
Report No	NBS/25/14

UPDATE ON NAIRN TOWN CENTRE ACTION PLAN

Report by Director of Development & Infrastructure

Summary

This report updates Members on the feedback from a consultation event aimed at addressing Town Centre Regeneration in Nairn, and subsequent progress on the preparation of a Nairn Town Centre Action Plan. This will set out a portfolio of preferred projects to increase footfall in the town centre and is intended to assist in applications for funding towards delivering such improvements.

A draft version of the Nairn Town Centre Action Plan is now being prepared reflecting the outcomes of the event. This report seeks approval for a draft version of the Town Centre Action Plan to be finalised and published for consultation. The consultation will enable officers to consider any comments when progressing the Action Plan towards adoption as non-statutory Supplementary Guidance.

1. Background

- 1.1 Members will recall that in late 2013 The Council was successful in securing a bid from Scottish Government to undertake a series of design workshops targeting town centre regeneration. During April and May 2014 The Council held events in Nairn, Tain and Fort William which involved working closely with local communities to identify the best ways of maximising footfall and delivering town centre regeneration.
- 1.2 The Nairn Town Centre Action Plan event engaged a range of stakeholders and generated a shared vision for the town centre's future. During the two day event participants were involved in a range of sessions that sought to draw out their aims and aspirations for the future of the town centre, and prioritise these. The events were well attended, attracting representatives from a range of local businesses, community councils, community organisations, volunteer groups and local schools. The event concluded with a leaflet being circulated setting out the preferred projects and proposals agreed by those in attendance.

2 Action Plan Proposals

- 2.1 A Town Centre Action Plan is now being developed which sets out details of the 16 proposals identified at the event, with indicative short, medium and long-term. These are shown in Appendix A.
- 2.2 Short-term proposals focused on:
 - tidying up the High St:
 - High St improvements
 - Shop front enhancements

- improving fabric, lighting, and attractiveness of connecting vennels between High Street and King Street;
- considering options for use, and redevelopment of the former Social Work offices;
- encouraging the reuse of the upper floors in High Street properties; and
- the provision of a multi-functional space at King Street.

2.3 Medium-term proposals focused on:

- improving High St traffic management, and a review of public spaces, specifically:
 - at Castle Square;
 - the provision of a civic hub at the Court House;
 - the provision of a town square associated with the adjacent Court House proposals; and
 - the provision of a civic hub at the Court House.
- reconfiguration of car parking.

2.4 Long-term proposals include:

- investigation of options for improved access to the High Street;
- promotion of river access and riverside walk;
- reinstatement of King St (A96);
- provision of traffic calming measures on King Street; and
- the conversion of the Finance Office to support the town square proposal.

3. Progress to date/Timescales

3.1 A draft report has been prepared by a consultant team and is being finalised for public consultation. The consultation will enable officers to consider any comments in progressing the Action Plan towards adoption as non-statutory Supplementary Guidance, subject to Members approval.

3.2 The formation of the Nairn Town Team is welcomed and noted, as is their early progress in undertaking improvements to the town centre environment. The Council will consult with all community groups who contributed to the Action Plan events on the draft Action Plan.

4. Fit with the Programme for the Highland Council

4.1 The work outlined in this report contributes to commitments within “Working together for the Highlands”, in particular supporting the development of urban centres and putting local communities at the forefront of these processes.

5. Implications

5.1 Resource

Resources to deliver the Action Plan are available from the Development and Infrastructure Service budget.

5.2 Legal

There are no known legal implications arising from this report.

5.3 Equalities

An Equalities Impact Assessment screening will be undertaken on the finalised draft action plan.

5.4 Climate Change/Carbon Clever

There are no known climate change implications arising from this report.

5.5 Risk

There are no known risks arising from this report.

5.6 Gaelic

All headings in the Action Plan will be provided in Gaelic.

5.7 Rural

There are no development-related rural issues arising directly from this report.

Recommendation

The Committee is invited to:

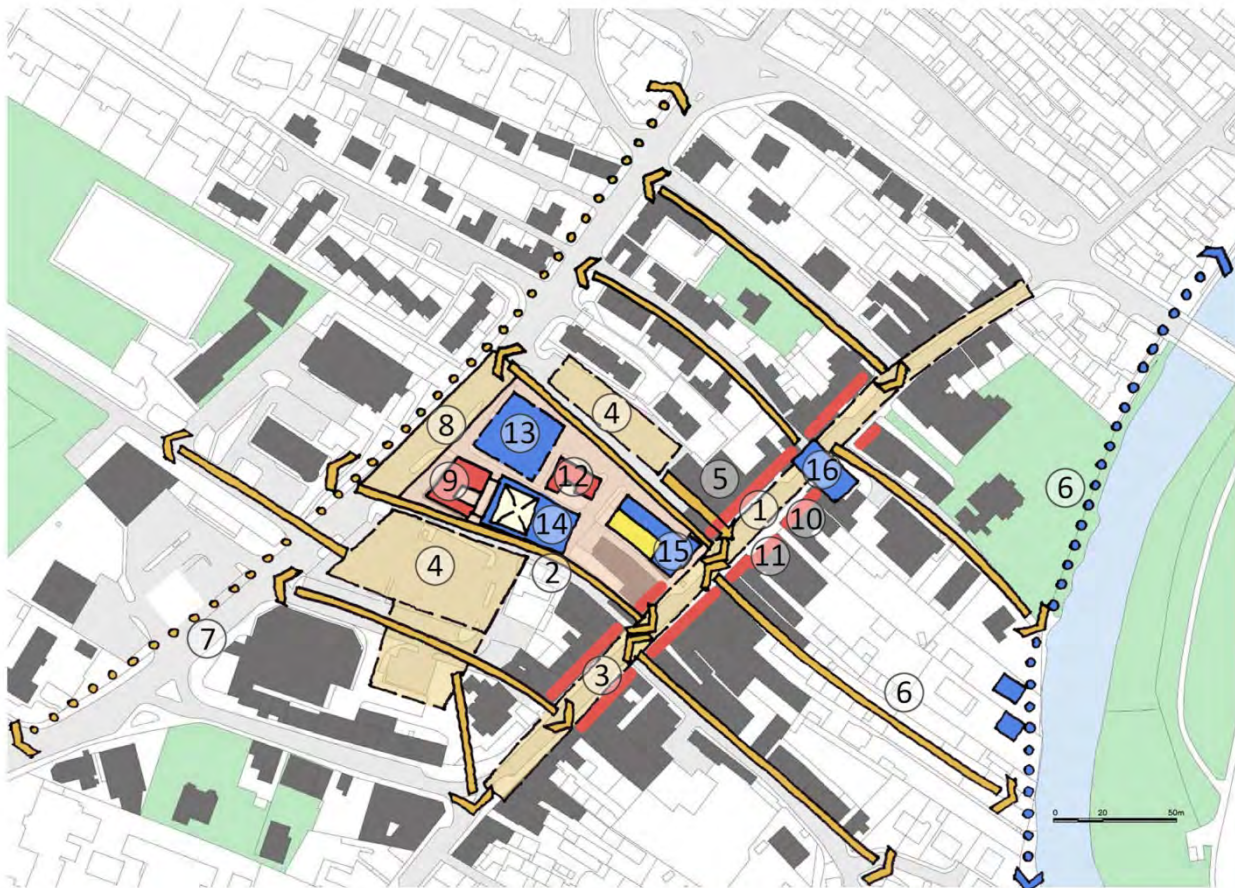
- i. note the shared priorities identified by participants at the Town Centre event;
- ii. agree for a draft version of the Nairn Town Centre Action Plan to be finalised and published for consultation, based on the structure and format presented at Committee; and
- iii. agree for Members and officers to work in collaboration with community representatives in delivering the outcomes identified.

Designation: Director of Development & Infrastructure

Date: 15th September 2014

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**APPENDIX 1
NAIRN TOWN CENTRE ACTION PLAN - PRIORITIES IDENTIFIED**



Short term

- 1 Tidy up High Street
- 2 King Street/High Street vennels
- 9 Social work office conversion
- 10 Upper floors conversion
- 11 Shopfront enhancements
- 13 Multi-functional space (King Street)

Medium term

- 3 High Street traffic management and public realm review
- 4 Reconfigure car parking
- 14 Town Square
- 15 Civic Hub
- 16 Castle Square

Long term

- 5 Investigate High St access at library
- 6 Promote river access and riverside walk
- 7 Re-instate King Street (A96) as a street
- 8 King Street traffic calming
- 12 Finance Office conversion