

Agenda Item	<b>6</b>
Report No	<b>SR/15/19</b>

**HIGHLAND COUNCIL**

**Committee:** Isle of Skye and Raasay Committee

**Date:** 30 September 2019

**Report Title:** Update on Developments to Support Tourism Infrastructure

**Report By:** Director of Development and Infrastructure and Chief Officer Resources (Community Services)

**1 Purpose/Executive Summary**

- 1.1 The growth in tourism across the north in recent years has brought significant benefits to the local economy. At the same time, it is recognised that this growth has put pressure on local infrastructure – roads, car parking, toilets – not designed for the increase in visitor numbers. This is particularly true across the Eilean a' Cheò Ward 10. Work has been ongoing over recent years to address a number of the challenges associated with the increase in visitor numbers. This report provides an update on the work to date and the projects proposed and planned for the immediate future.
- 1.2 The report notes that further funding from the Council to support development of facilities will need to be met from income generated from the sites.
- 1.3 The report also focuses on work to address traffic management issues across the Ward and asks Members to consider feedback from local engagement and agree to the introduction of car parking charges at a number of sites across Skye
- 1.4 A summary of the income figures from short stay Pay & Display car parks in Portree covering the periods April '16 to August '19 are included in the report.

**2 Recommendations**

- 2.1 Members are invited to:-
- Note the importance of tourism to the Eilean a' Cheò Ward 10;
  - Note the work undertaken to date to improve infrastructure across Ward 10;
  - Note the work planned to address infrastructure challenges;
  - Note the need for further investment at certain sites to support tourism and impact on local residents;

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- Consider how this investment might be delivered and whether or not to pilot new approaches to find solutions to some tourism challenges;
- Noting the feedback received to date, agree to the introduction of traffic orders to enable charging at Quiraing and Broadford Ford Road, subject to any further responses being received;
- Agree to the introduction of charging at Neist Point subject to the appropriate traffic order consultation process and further discussions with the Waterstein Township;
- Agree to the introduction of charging at the new off-street car park at Old Man of Storr, which would include the extension to this car park once complete;
- Noting the feedback received during the engagement and actions identified, agree to the introduction of charging at the new Bayfield West car park, following completion of the project, which would include a £10/month Local Parking Season Ticket (LPST) for local users; and
- Note the reporting performance of Pay & Display at short stay car parks in Portree
- Agree the parking tariffs outlined at appendix 3

### 3. Implications

- 3.1 Resource – A variety of funding has been utilised to develop infrastructure to date. Some investment has been from the Council and other through Leader, the Rural Tourism Infrastructure Fund and Scottish Government Rural Payments and Inspections Directorate (SGRPID). In most cases these funding streams will require some element of match funding which in some cases comes from the Council. Further funding from the Council to develop facilities needs to be met from income generated from the sites.
- 3.2 Legal – In order to enforce parking charges within any site, Traffic Regulation Orders would require to be published.
- 3.3 Community (Equality, Poverty and Rural) – In the main, the sites outlined in this paper are primarily visitor destinations. However, engagement with the wider community is crucial in order to understand any potential local impact. These have been highlighted at the appropriate sections. Appropriate impact assessment (equality, rural and socio-economic) have been undertaken regarding the proposals to introduce charging.
- 3.4 Climate Change / Carbon Clever – There has been a significant growth in tourism to Skye in recent years. The proposals within this paper attempt to manage visitor traffic and prevent damage to verges and the local landscape by providing dedicated parking facilities.
- 3.5 Risk – Income is required to support the capital investment made to develop the sites.
- 3.6 Gaelic – No implications.

### 4. Background

- 4.1 The growth of tourism in Skye and Raasay in recent years has been warmly welcomed and has brought significant benefits to the local community. This growth in numbers of visitors has also put pressure on key areas of infrastructure on Skye and Raasay and agencies and communities have been working together to consider how best to manage these.

- 4.2 Tourism generates significant economic benefits including direct expenditure by visitors to Highland of just over £1bn. While reports at a more local level are not routinely commissioned, a fairly robust estimate of the value to Skye & Raasay can be derived through analysis of earlier Skye & Lochalsh reports alongside more recent Highland figures. Based on this, benefits to the wider Skye & Lochalsh area are estimated to be:-
- £115m of direct spend by visitors to the area;
  - a further £26m of indirect expenditure by the tourism industry purchasing local goods and services; and
  - directly supporting over 2,500 jobs (including the self-employed).
- 4.3 As members will be aware, tourism has seen a period of sustained growth with visitor numbers growing by around 25% over the decade from 2009 - 2018. The overall economic impact of tourism has grown at an even faster rate – in part due to an increasing proportion of overseas visitors who, on average, spend more than domestic visitors.
- 4.4 This in turn has encouraged business expansion and more business start-ups in the Ward. In the 2018/19 financial year the Council's Business Gateway service handled 50 local enquiries from tourism businesses and have handled a further 18 enquiries in the 2019/20 year to date. An additional 8 new businesses from the food and drink sector who are all very closely linked to the tourism industry have been assisted.
- 4.5 As Members are also aware, these increases have created challenges in a number of areas with Skye being one of the areas of Highland where this has been most marked. In order to tackle some of these a number of local initiatives were started but three more strategic developments described in the following sections are of note:-

#### Skye Tourism Task Force

At the request of the Scottish Government Highlands & Islands Enterprise (HIE) set up a Skye Tourism Task force in 2017. This helped formalise some of the partnership working already under way between organisations such as the Council, HIE, VisitScotland and the tourism sector.

#### Skye Connect

For the last decade, the accepted approach to developing tourism in Scotland has been for the tourism industry to take a lead in defining the priorities for development with public sector partners then being encouraged to support the delivery of these priorities. While Skye alone has had lower key tourism groups for a number of years, a more significant push from tourism business partners led to the setting up of Skye Connect in 2017/18. The existence of such a group, with enough critical mass to employ a paid officer rather than relying on volunteer effort, has allowed more work to be undertaken in areas such as gathering more robust data about visitors to Skye and using this to develop a longer-term strategy / destination plan. The research element of this is being undertaken by the highly respected Moffat Centre for Travel & Tourism at Glasgow Caledonian University with funding from HIE. The wider strategy / destination planning work is being undertaken in house but with additional support from HIE, the Highland Council and other partners.

## Rural Tourism Infrastructure Fund

In response to the situation on Skye and in a number of other areas of Scotland where natural or “non-business” attractions were experiencing pressures from the increase in visitor numbers without there being an obvious source of funding to relieve these, the Scottish Government launched the Rural Tourism Infrastructure Fund (RTIF) in spring 2018. This scheme, worth £6m over two years, allowed up to 70% of costs of Local Authority or community led projects to be grant aided. Match funding could come from a variety of sources, but Local Authorities or National Park Authorities had to be the applicant to the fund. The initial phase of this fund concluded in spring 2019 but a further round with a £3m allocation of funds was announced as part of the new programme for government on 3 September 2019.

- 4.6 While there have been some challenges at a number of locations on Skye, the most notable have been pressures on the infrastructure at a number of key sites, with particular reference to the condition of the roads, car parking capacity and access to toilet and motorhome waste facilities. In part this has been driven by what might be referred to as the social media effect where reviews recommend certain sites as being “must visit” destinations thereby increasing visitor numbers who in turn recommend the destination creating a self-perpetuating situation of increasing visitor numbers.
- 4.7 In addressing the challenges outlined above, the Council and its partners including - SGRPID, HIE, SNH, Forestry Commission, LSHA, Skye Connect, Minginish Community Hall Association, Portree & Braes Community Trust, Portree Tennis & Squash Club, Waterstein Township, Fairy Glen Improvement Group, Staffin Community Trust, OATS and the John Muir Trust - have sought to identify key areas of pressure and seek investment to undertake a range of projects to address the challenges. Current developments and investment are outlined in section 5 and future proposed developments in section 6.

## **5. Current Developments and Investment**

- 5.1 In addition to the general investment in the road network, total investment committed to in the last 18 months for current and future tourism specific developments is £2.9m. Investment from Highland Council has been £1m, with further business cases being developed for phase 2 car parking at the Storr and proposed improvements to the Fairy Glen. The current improvements outlined below relates to:-

- Car Parking;
- Toilets and Motorhome Facilities; and
- Paths and Viewing Points

### **5.2 Car Parking**

#### **5.3 The Storr**

An additional roadside layby at The Storr was delivered in advance of the 2019 main tourist season at a projected cost of £75k. Funded by Council capital borrowing, this will be off-set by revenue generated from parking charges. A further element of off-street car parking started at the end of July and work is estimated to be complete by end-October 2019. This will provide further spaces in addition to the roadside parking, bringing the capacity up to a total of 140. This will cost £390,000 with funds coming from The Highland Council and LEADER. Further road works to improve safety are being delivered alongside this phase.

#### 5.4 **Fairy Pools**

The Fairy Pools car park was completed in time for the 2019 season following several years of work carried out by the Fairy Pools Project Group - made up of representatives of the Council, Forestry Commission, Minginish Community Hall Association (MCHA) and Glen Brittle residents. The cost of this project totalled £360,000 with funding provided by The Highland Council, LEADER, HIE and MCHA. This project is now being led by the Outdoor Access Trust for Scotland (OATS), who lease the car park from MCHA, following their Asset Transfer from the Forestry Commission.

#### 5.5 **Quiraing Car Park**

Through a partnership between the Council and SGRPID and investment of £195k, roadside on-street parking and an off-street car park was developed at the Quiraing and completed early July 2019. This has provided 60 on-street parking spaces and 50 off-street parking spaces.

Following local engagement, the intention is to introduce parking charges at both sites. This is outlined in section 6.2 below.

#### 5.6 **Neist Point additional parking**

As part of the Rural Tourism Infrastructure Fund pilot projects and in partnership with the Council, £165K funding was secured from both sources to develop an additional 300m of on-street parking for up to 50 cars at Neist point, improve the existing turning area, surface existing on-street parking, create a new passing place and improve and extend an existing passing place.

Discussions are on-going with Community Representatives as to how parking charges may be introduced that would help support the management, maintenance and future infrastructure developments. Further detail is outlined in section 7.4

#### 5.7 **Bayfield Car Park East**

A traffic order has been granted to introduce pay & display at the Bayfield East car park for Coaches, Mini-Buses and Motorhomes in order to improve the management of traffic in this area.

#### 5.8 **Blabheinn car park and toilets**

Led by the landowner, the John Muir Trust, an expanded car park and toilets are currently under construction at the start of the Blabheinn footpath. Total cost of the project is £94,000 with this being funded by the John Muir Trust and RTIF. Completion is expected by early October.

#### 5.9 **Toilets and Campervan Facilities**

#### 5.10 **Old Man of Storr toilets and motorhome waste disposal/service point**

Funding of £429k has been approved through RTIF and Highland Council to develop toilet facilities, motorhome service point and cycle stances at Old Man of Storr. The target completion and hand over date for operation is the beginning of April 2020.

#### 5.11 **Fairy Pools Toilets**

As part of the RTIF pilot projects, funding of £340k was secured to undertake the construction of toilet facilities at the Fairy Pools Car Park. Work is currently under way to meet the conditions of SEPA prior to the commencement of construction, with the toilets expected to be fully operational for the 2020 season. As with the car park, this project is now being led by OATS.

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### 5.12 **Paths and Viewing Points**

5.13 The number of visitors accessing key sites has resulted in a need to consider how best to maintain and restore paths. Funding has been sought to improve and maintain paths at a number of sites.

### 5.14 **Old Man of Storr Path**

Funded through RTIF and SGRPID at a cost of £264k, work is currently underway for the completion of design and construction documents of a new path on the upper ground of the Old Man of Storr. The project is being managed by the Council's Development and Infrastructure Service and the funding requirement for the management and maintenance of the path over the next 20 years is being met by the Council through revenue generated from the car parking charges.

This project has the backing and support of the informal Skye Iconic Sites group that includes representation from THC, SGRPID, SNH, Skye Connect, OATS, MCHA and Staffin Trust. The project is due to commence by the end of October 2019 and complete by October 2020.

## 6. **Future developments**

6.1 The following sets out a number of projects which are either currently proposed and seeking funding/awaiting funding outcome or are proposed for the future.

### 6.2 **Car Parking**

#### 6.3 **Old Man of Storr car park phase 2**

As identified at section 5.3, part of the planning application included a requirement for the Council to demonstrate that an additional phase of parking would be developed as it was acknowledged that phase 1 would not be sufficient to take all cars off the roadside verges.

Planning is at an advanced stage with the potential to begin works in January 2020 and to be complete for the start of the season in April 2020. This is subject to approval of the funding required, estimated to be around £400k, and a business case for this is being developed. As with the phase 1 car park, it is proposed charging be introduced to support the capital investment required. This is outlined at section 7.5 below.

#### 6.4 **Waterstein additional passing places**

The Council has committed to funding 2 new passing places which are due to commence from October 2019. Costs of this are £30k.

#### 6.5 **Fairy Glen additional passing places**

The Council has committed to funding 2 new passing places which are due to commence from October 2019. Costs of this are £20k.

#### 6.6 **Fairy Glen roadside parking**

Discussions are underway to consider a range of solutions to address the issues at the Fairy Glen, including the potential for a partnership between the Council and SGRPID, similar to what has been delivered at the Quiraing. This proposal, along with the additional passing places, was supported by the Fairy Glen Improvement Group at a meeting held on the 12 September 2019.

6.7 **Bayfield Car Park extension and motorhome waste disposal/service point**

This is a partnership project between the Council, Portree & Braes Community Trust and the Portree Tennis & Squash Club to demolish the existing squash court building and convert it and the old tennis court into new parking, including a motorhome service point. The project will provide an additional 84 car parking spaces, 8 motorhome spaces and service point.

Funding of £600k has been identified for this project. £300k has been confirmed through RTIF to be match funded by £300k by Highland Council. The Council's investment is dependent upon the introduction of charging in order to offset the capital investment required and this is subject to understanding the views of the local community. Public consultation regarding the proposal to introduce Pay & Display commenced week beginning 26 August 2019. Further details are set out in section 7.6.

6.8 **Paths and Viewing Points**

6.9 **Bridges, Path-works and Viewing Point project**

In order to attempt to address some of the environmental damage at key sites a Skye Iconic sites group has been formed with representatives from the Highland Council, SGRPID, Scottish Natural Heritage, Skye Connect, Outdoor Access Trust Scotland, MCHA and Staffin Trust. Through this group an application has been submitted for EU funding through the Natural Cultural and Heritage Fund for a project to address Habitat Restoration, Interpretation, Bridges, Path-works and Viewing Points at the Old Man of Storr, Fairy Pools and the Quiraing. A decision on this application is imminent.

6.10 While much has been achieved in the last 1 – 2 years as described above, it is clear that more remains to be done and consideration needs to be given how to address a number of further challenges if the quality of visitor experience is to be retained or even improved and impacts on the local population minimised. As with previous projects a number of these issues are site specific but there are also some wider issues requiring consideration.

6.11 **Kilt Rock**

This Council managed site has an existing parking area and viewpoint, but parking space is inadequate, and the site is currently suffering significant erosion from parking outside the built area. Some minor repair works such as filling gullies and potholes were delivered week beginning 16th September 2019; in the longer-term further expansion of the car park and related landscaping is required. Further improvements to the viewpoint itself would be desirable and, taken together a project such as this could be eligible for RTIF funding.

6.12 **Elgol**

Broadford and Strath Community Company submitted a bid to RTIF in spring 2019 to enhance the visitor experience in Elgol by providing fit for purpose toilets, paths and parking. This bid was unsuccessful and at present a temporary arrangement is in place regarding the existing toilets. Parking pressures do however still remain and further work is required with the community to identify alternative solutions.

6.13 In addition to the above there are other sites where the current rates of growth may suggest improvements will be required in the near future. These include the Coral beach at Dunvegan, Dunvegan village car park, Carbost village, Broadford village car park, Kyleakin village car park and the car park at Armadale pier

#### 6.14 **Waste Collection**

The waste collection service is currently reviewing some of the issues they experienced during the 2019 summer months to prepare for the 2020 season. A number of solutions are being considered to help improve the service, including, enhanced service delivery through the summer months, route optimisation of waste collection, modern apprenticeships and driver training.

6.15 In addition to the above site-specific work, further activity is under way to tackle other concerns that, while apparent on Skye, are not unique to Skye but are also evident in other areas of Highland or Scotland. Most notable amongst these is work related to the increased use of motorhomes and their waste disposal requirements and road safety related work.

6.16 A number of communities across Highland and beyond are looking to introduce motorhome waste facilities aimed at those who may not always stay on commercial campsites. Increasing the overall level of provision is likely to benefit all areas as most modern vehicles don't require daily disposal so provision of a suitable network of facilities is more important and more viable than trying to provide facilities in every location. Some key sites such as the community led, and Highland Council supported a project to provide facilities in Mallaig will clearly have a beneficial effect on Skye as many motorhomes will have the opportunity to dispose of waste before arriving on Skye reducing the demand for local facilities.

6.17 In recognition of the level of interest in the provision of such facilities by community groups, the Council is also working with Scottish Water and the Scottish Environmental Protection Agency to produce further practical and legal guidance to help simplify the process of communities undertaking such projects.

6.18 Some road safety concerns have become evident with the increase in traffic levels and in particular increases in the number of overseas drivers or hired motorhomes where drivers may be less familiar with Highland roads and / or their vehicle. With this issue not being unique to Skye, Transport Scotland along with Police Scotland have taken a lead in producing a road safety leaflet and online resource available at <https://roadsafety.scot/wp-content/uploads/2019/02/Driving-In-Scotland-2019.pdf>. This includes advice around the keep left message – championed by local resident Sharon Anslow - as well as how to drive on single track roads. It is widely promoted / distributed through organisation such as VisitScotland as well as being supplied to visitors by car and motorhome hire companies.

6.19 In addition to the infrastructure initiatives described above there has been a growing level of recognition of the need to influence visitor behaviour through marketing and promotional activity. At a national level VisitScotland is focussing more effort on promoting off season visits and visits to “hidden gems” with less emphasis on honeypots such as the Fairy Pools. This is complemented by local activity such as the “Skye Time” initiative being undertaken by Skye Connect to encourage visitors to slow down and immerse themselves in the area rather than simply rushing around a few well-known sites.

6.20 To further support this type of approach Business Gateway have run a number of workshops for Skye businesses in the last year with 55 businesses attending. A number of these have covered subjects like “TripAdvisor”, “Facebook for business” and “Producing engaging online content” which gives businesses the opportunity not just to promote their business but to help influence visitors who are often heavily influenced by social media.



## 7. Introduction of Car Parking Charges

7.1 As outlined in sections 5 and 6, some of the investment made by the Council towards developing new car parking facilities to address traffic management issues has only been possible through the introduction of charging at these sites. To date, charging has been agreed at Old Man Of Storr (on-street) and at Lisigarry Court, Portree, (on-street). The June paper to this Committee highlighted the need for further engagement in order to consider whether charging should be introduced at other sites. A summary of this and recommendations are outlined below.

### 7.2 Quiraing

Engagement with Community Councils took place at the Ward Forum on 10 June 2019. SGRPID as landowner of the off-street car park and a partner with the Council in the project have liaised with the Linicro Stock Club/Common Grazing Committee over the proposals.

The Traffic regulation order was published on Thursday 12 September – proposing the following tariffs:-

PD018	The Quiraing, Roadside, Skye	Mon to Sun	Up to 3 Hr	£3.00
		8am to 8pm	Up to 6 Hrs	£5.00
		12 hours Max Stay	Minibus per Visit	£5.00

Pre-engagement feedback from the Community Councils and Stock Club/Common Grazings committee was generally supportive of charging, if there is the opportunity for income generation to be reinvested in infrastructure in the local community.

The statutory consultation is open until Friday 4 October. No negative feedback has been received to date and an update will be provided at the committee.

**Recommendation:** to agree to the traffic order, subject to the review of any further responses received, which will introduce charging at the roadside at Quiraing.

### 7.3 Broadford Ford Road

A Traffic Order was advertised in Dec 2018 including on street parking places for pay and display at Ford Road, Broadford. Following a 21 day statutory consultation period in 2019 this Traffic Order has been made in part, excluding pay and display charges as this has been put on hold pending further review.

Further engagement has taken place with the local community and the Access Panel. This focused on the citing of disabled bays in the main car parking area but also to ensure disabled bays were available outside the chemists parallel to the shopping area. Feedback also requested removal of the loading bays as this was causing undue confusion with regards parking. It was also proposed to change the period of free parking to support access to local business. The traffic order was revised as a result of this feedback prior to formal publication.

The Traffic regulation order was published on Thursday 12 September – proposing the following tariffs:-

PD017	Ford Road, Broadford (Pay & Display)	Mon to Sun	Up to 1 Hr	£0.00
		8am to 6pm	Up to 2 Hrs	£1.00
		3 hours Max Stay	Up to 3 Hrs	£2.00
		1st March to 31st Oct		

All Blue Badge Holders will not be charged for parking or be subject to a time limitation.

The statutory consultation is open until Friday 4 October. No negative feedback has been received to date and an update will be provided at the committee.

**Recommendation:** to agree to the traffic order, subject to the review of any further responses received, which will introduce charging at Broadford Ford Road.

7.4 **Neist Point**

In addition to the Community Council engagement on 10 June, Ward Members have met with representatives of the Waterstein Township on a number of occasions, most recently on 20 September.

At the meeting held on 20 September the following proposal was discussed:-

Income derived from on-street parking can only be used by the Local Authority for traffic management and road infrastructure related improvements. Discussions with the Waterstein Township have highlighted the importance of local benefit of any income derived from the introduction of charging at Neist Point. It is therefore proposed that, if charging was to be agreed, part of the revenue generated is used to deliver additional/extended passing places from the Upper Milovaig junction to Neist Point Parking. This would help address the significant challenges and pressure upon the roads identified by the community. This would be in addition to the 2 passing places already committed to within the roads programme and dependent on the required land being gifted for the purpose required.

Further discussions with the Township are required to consider whether there are opportunities to further ease the traffic in the area by creating an off-street car park in an agreement with the Township. Work to explore this opportunity will be progressed in the coming months.

**Recommendation:** to agree to the introduction of car parking charges at Neist point, subject to the appropriate Traffic Order consultation process and further discussions with the Waterstein Township.

7.5 **Old Man of Storr**

As outlined at section 5.3/6.3, work is underway to provide additional off-street car parking of up to 65 spaces bringing the total capacity of the site to 140. This will be supported by toilet facilities and camper van facilities and work will commence on these later in year. To help manage the site, it is proposed to charge for the off-street car park in line with the on-street which is already in place. The charging structure would be the same. Engagement with local stakeholders including the Community Councils and the Community Trust have found support for these proposals. It is proposed that the introduction of charging would also apply to the extension to the Storr car park which is currently under development. Revenue from parking charges will support the business case for the Council to borrow the required capital for the extension and associated works.

The following Tariffs are proposed:-

<b>CP0163</b>	Storr Car Park, Skye	Mon to Sun	Up to 3 hrs	£3.00
		8am to 8pm	Up to 6 Hrs	£5.00
		12 hours Max Stay	Up to 12 Hrs	£7.00

**Recommendation:** to agree to the introduction of charging at the new off-street car park at Old Man of Storr and to the extension of this car park once complete.

## 7.6 Bayfield West

### 7.6.1 **Background**

Funding has been approved from the Rural Tourism Infrastructure Fund to develop and extend Bayfield West car park. This is a partnership between the Council, Portree and Braes Community Trust and the Portree Tennis and Squash Club and builds on the feedback from the car parking options appraisal undertaken in 2018.

It is proposed to extend and re-configure the current Bayfield West Car Park through the demolition of the squash court and conversion of the tennis court. This would provide an additional 84 car parking spaces and 8 motorhome spaces and motorhome waste disposal/water services.

### 7.6.2 **Local Engagement**

The increase in visitor numbers has put particular pressure on the car park and whilst it is heavily used by visitors, local residents also make use of these facilities. A consultation with the local community began on 26 August and ran until 9th September. Posters and leaflets were available in the local area to advertise the consultation and promotion through social media and local radio also took place. The plans were available to view at SLCVO offices between 26 August and 29 August where surveys were available and a drop in session was held in Somerled Square and Tigh Na Sgìre on Saturday 31 August. The plans were available to view at Tigh na Sgìre between 2 September and 9 September, where surveys were available. An online survey was also available between the 26 August and 9 September to understand the views of residents.

### 7.6.3 **Feedback from Engagement**

160 responses were received as part of the consultation. 74% of those responding expressed support for the Bayfield West car park project with 13% indicating they were not in favour and a further 13% indicating they did not know.

Over 90% of respondents indicated benefits associated with the project. The main benefit was noted to be the increase in available parking but further benefits were identified as a reduction in congestion, increased campervan space and increased local revenue from parking.

Respondents were also asked to identify any concerns they had with the project. The main concern identified was the impact of charging on locals and particularly those coming to Portree from outlying villages and communities. This was particularly for those commuting to work or making short stops. Further concerns noted include that the proposals were not of a sufficient scale to address the challenge and that enforcement would be required to prevent increased disruption. There was concern that large motorhomes would take up additional parking spaces. Concerns were also expressed that charging will increase displacement to non-controlled residential areas and other private car parks in town.

Respondents were specifically asked about what difference the introduction of charging would have on them and their family. 27% indicated that it was either a change for the better/may be a helpful change or would make no difference. A further 18% indicated that it was a change that could be coped with. 47% of respondents indicated that it could cause them some difficulty.

When asked for further details from those who felt it could cause them some difficulty, concerns included personal impact on their costs of living, the lack of public transport alternatives to driving, increased costs to business, that it may result in people choosing not to come into Portree to shop and opt for online shopping, that it penalises regular users of Tigh na Drochaid Centre and that a permit would not guarantee a space.

Suggestions made by respondents included that spaces should be reserved for permit holders only and that there should be a concessionary rate for locals that is subsidised by higher charging for tourists. It was also suggested by some that the plans needed to be more ambitious and that a multi-storey car park was what was needed for the area. A number of comments noted the need to improve the pedestrian access across the car park, particularly to the Resource Centre for those with mobility issues. It was also suggested that additional infrastructure work was required to accommodate increased traffic including improvements and junctions and traffic signalling. Further feedback indicated that there was inadequate disabled parking provision within the plans and that the proposals should include toilet provision.

#### 7.6.4 ***Responding to the Feedback***

The consultation with the community has provided helpful feedback regarding the car park project. Feedback indicates that there is strong support for the car park project, particularly because this will result in an increase in the number of spaces. It has also provided the opportunity to hear about concerns from the local community. A number of the issues highlighted are outlined below with feedback on the issues raised provided.

##### **Impact on charging locals**

The main concern raised was the impact upon locals using the car park. If charging was to be introduced, this would result in additional costs for some individuals. A socio-economic impact assessment has been undertaken and given the higher use of cars in rural areas, the proposals could have a potential impact upon some users on low incomes. It was suggested as part of the feedback that a concessionary rate should be provided for locals to mitigate this impact. Concerns were also raised about the importance of short stops to enable people to make short visits to the chemist/bank/post office without being charged.

In order to mitigate the impact upon locals it is proposed:-

- A concessionary rate is proposed for locals. A £10/month permit would be available for locals. This roughly equates to a charge of 40p per day. Whilst this will still result in increased costs for some individuals, the costs are low and considered to be manageable;
- Blue badge holders would not be charged;
- Loading bays situated through the town would continue to be available for short stops to enable people to make short visits to particular shops; and
- Charges would not be introduced until the project has been completed.

##### **Proposals not sufficient to address the scale of challenge**

It was suggested by a number of respondents that the current proposals do not go far enough to address the scale of the challenge. The current proposals are only phase 1 in a wider plan to redevelop the Bayfield area. Phase 2 proposes to extend the car park further and includes consideration to develop/reclaim some of the shore-side land to provide additional parking infrastructure, including potential for a shore-side walkway and amenity facilities to include toilets. However, progressing phase 2 is reliant on utilising the revenue generated from the charging.

### **Need for increased enforcement**

Concerns were expressed regarding the need for enforcement to ensure that the new facilities are appropriately used and not misused by campervans etc. To support the proposals, there would be an increase in traffic enforcement officers the costs of which would be met from income generated at Bayfield and other sites across Skye.

### **Managing campervans**

Concerns were expressed regarding the management of campervans within the new car park area. Campervans will not be allowed to park in normal car parking spaces. New campervan bays have been designed both within Bayfield West and within Lisgarry Court. The introduction of waste facilities for campervans will help generate income and address the need to provide facilities for use.

### **Concerns displacement**

Some concerns were expressed regarding the potential displacement of cars currently using Bayfield to other sites around the village in order to avoid charging. This has not been the experience where charging has been introduced elsewhere however as with the introduction of any new traffic management mechanism, review is essential to consider any wider impacts as a result of the change. It would be proposed to review the impact after the first year and consider any mitigation required.

### **Infrastructure**

It was suggested that there was a need to improve pedestrian access across the car park as part of the changes, particularly for those who use the resource centre. The plans will be reviewed as a result of this feedback and consideration given how best to revise the plans given the comments received. We will liaise with the access panel on this.

It was noted there was a need to improve junctions and traffic signals as part of the project. This is one element of the project and will be taken forward as part of the proposals.

It was suggested there is inadequate disabled parking bays. The number and location of disabled parking bays will be reviewed and we will liaise directly with the access panel on this.

#### **7.6.5 Recommendation**

Taking into account the feedback received and the actions identified based upon this feedback in section 7.6.4, it is proposed to progress with the Bayfield West Car park project, including the proposal to charge within the new location, on completion of the project. Charging is required both to progress the current proposals and for any future investment to expand infrastructure within the area. Feedback from the community expressed support for the project and the need for improved infrastructure. Whilst concerns have been identified regarding the impact of charging on locals, the proposed mitigation regarding the charging structure should help to minimise the impact.

The following Tariffs are proposed:-

CP0167	Bayfield West, Car Park	Mon to Sun	Up to 2 hrs	£1.00
		8am to 8pm	Up to 3 Hrs	£2.00
			Up to 6 Hrs	£3.00
		Pay & Display	Up to 12 Hrs	£4.00
		12 hours max stay		

In addition a Local Parking Season Ticket will be made available for commuters as per the existing Council Model via the Ringo service at £10 per month.

All Blue Badge Holders will not be charged for parking.

**Recommendation:** Noting the feedback received during the engagement and actions identified, agree to the introduction of charging at the new Bayfield West car park which would include a £10/month season pass for locals.

## 8. Performance of Pay and Display Car Parks

- 8.1 A breakdown of car park income generated in Portree since Aug 2016 can be found at appendix 2. A total of £292,652 of income has been taken from the car parks at Somerled and the Green and includes income collected from roadside parking at the Storr, introduced in July 2019.
- 8.2 Appendix 1 provides a breakdown of all penalty charge notices issued across Skye since August 2017. A total of 1,593 notices have been issued over this period.
- 8.3 A schedule of all tariffs for car parks in Skye – both existing and proposed – can be found at appendix 3.

## 9. Longer term approach

- 9.1 Overall tourism levels in Highland are expected to fluctuate in the coming years as they have in the past as economic circumstances at a given time are always a significant influence. However, changing visitor behaviour as the so called “selfie generation” focus their visits on certain sites suggests continued pressures may be felt at certain locations.
- 9.2 Much of the activity to date has revolved around providing an increased level of provision e.g. more parking but in the longer term it is anticipated that more thought will need to be given to visitor management as a way of reducing pressure. Some of this will involve continuing to influence behaviour through the promotional activity approach described in 6.18 above but it will be necessary to explore new and innovative options as well.
- 9.3 One area worth further exploration would be to use new forms of technology to try and address tourism challenges. Through their own agencies such as the Scottish Funding Council and HIE, the Scottish Government has supported the creation of a number of Innovation Centres. These Centres aim to enhance innovation and entrepreneurship across Scotland’s key economic sectors, drawing on Scotland’s research expertise in the relevant sector to work on problems and opportunities identified by industry. As tourism is one of Scotland’s key sectors, there is currently an interest in seeing how this approach might address some of the problems identified by the sector.
- 9.4 As an example, technologies already exist that can use sensors to measure things like traffic flows, types of vehicle and whether parking places are in use or available – all in real time. There may be opportunities for projects that use a combination of technologies such as these to try and address an identified problem. Bearing in mind the current challenges on Skye, the high profile of the island and the levels of business that could give the critical mass required for a pilot project the Council may wish to consider whether to enter some form of innovation partnership to pilot new approaches to tackling a tourism challenge.

- 9.5 Expectations on the levels of future public sector funding suggest there will continue to be challenges in finding the resources required for investment. While not specific to Skye, it is relevant to remind Members that the Council is currently part way through a public consultation regarding whether or not to introduce a transient visitor levy as one potential means of generating funds for tourism investment. It is considered important that a good cross section of views from those in a key tourism area such as Skye are gathered and to this end the Council continues to encourage participation in the online survey which is open to residents, businesses and visitors until 20 October 2019.
- 9.6 In addition, the Council is currently considering car park charging options both in towns and villages and at visitor sites and how income raised might be used. This is the subject of a separate report to a special meeting of EDI Committee on the 24 October 2019, but it is appropriate to recognise that consideration of this issue and tourism investment are interrelated issues in an area such as Skye.

Designation: Director of Development and Infrastructure and Chief Officer Resources  
(Community Services)

Date: 23 September 2019

Author: Alison Clark, Acting Head of Policy  
Shane Manning, Principal Traffic Officer  
Colin Simpson, Principal Tourism & Film Officer  
Willie MacKinnon, Ward Manager (Eilean a' Cheò)

## Penalty charge Notices Issued on Skye from 2017 – 2019

Penalty Charge Notices - Issued on SKYE 2017 to 2019																										
Count of PCN																										
CPZ and Street	2017					2018								2019								Grand Total				
	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr		May	Jun	Jul	Aug
Dunvegan																										
Dunvegan Car Park																										1
Isle Of Skye																										
A855 Storr																										16
Kyleakin																										
Kyleakin Road																										1
Kyleside											1															1
Kyleside		1																								1
Kyleakin		2																								2
Portree																										
Bayfield (West) Car Park											1	5	11	7							1	14	2	2	46	89
Bayfield Road	1																					1	2		3	7
Bosville Terrace	1	2			1			1				3										3	1	3	2	17
Lisigarry Court																									94	94
Lisigarry Place																							2	2		4
Park Lane																					3	1				4
Park Road	7	14											1	1							1					24
Quay Street														2	1									1		5
Somerled Square	2	5	1		1	1	1			4	1		4	6	2	4	1	3	3	6	7	4			2	58
Somerled Square Car Park	8	15	24	12	10	6	12	17	7	23	20	24	27	18	22	16	12	14	35	33	37	35	23	12	29	491
The Green Car Park	24	22	20	12	17	7	18	17	5	23	19	28	36	36	14	10	17	13	17	33	31	27	24	14	28	512
Wentworth Street	10	5																						1	1	17
Windsor Crescent	2																									2
Bayfield Car Park											1	1														2
Bank Street		1																								1
<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>55</b>	<b>67</b>	<b>45</b>	<b>24</b>	<b>29</b>	<b>14</b>	<b>31</b>	<b>35</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>50</b>	<b>43</b>	<b>61</b>	<b>79</b>	<b>70</b>	<b>39</b>	<b>30</b>	<b>30</b>	<b>31</b>	<b>58</b>	<b>74</b>	<b>76</b>	<b>101</b>	<b>196</b>	<b>92</b>	<b>251</b>	<b>1,593</b>



## Income Collected in Skye Car Parks July 2016/17 – 2019/20

Income Collected – Skye, On & Off Street					
<b>SOMERLED</b>	<b>Aug 2016</b>	<b>2017/18</b>	<b>2018/19</b>	<b>Aug 2019</b>	<b>TOTAL</b>
Transactions Numbers					0
Total Rev without Remote Payment	£22,154.17	£31,251.38	£68,226.73		£121,632
Cash %	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	
Credit %	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	
RINGO Transactions	0	414	1141	1139	2,694
RINGO Income	£0.00	£648.00	£1,672.00	£1,703.80	£4,024
Free Transactions					0
	<b>£22,154.17</b>	<b>£31,899.38</b>	<b>£69,898.73</b>	<b>£1,703.80</b>	<b>£125,656</b>
<b>THE GREEN</b>	<b>2016/17</b>	<b>2017/18</b>	<b>2018/19</b>	<b>2019/20</b>	<b>TOTAL</b>
Transactions Numbers					0
Total Rev without Remote Payment	£18,315.00	£26,980.00	£43,272.25		£88,567
Cash %	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	
Credit %	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	
RINGO Transactions	0	180	693	859	1,732
RINGO Income	£0.00	£286.00	£1,019.00	£1,270.00	£2,575
Free Transactions					0
	<b>£18,315.00</b>	<b>£27,266.00</b>	<b>£44,291.25</b>	<b>£1,270.00</b>	<b>£91,142</b>
<b>STAFFIN, THE STORR ON Street - Roadside</b>	<b>2016/17</b>	<b>2017/18</b>	<b>2018/19</b>	<b>2019/20</b>	<b>TOTAL</b>
Transactions Numbers				11,641	11641
Total Rev without Remote Payment				£37,270.00	£37,270
Cash %	0.00	0.00	0.00	57.00	
Credit %	0.00	0.00	0.00	43.00	
RINGO Transactions	0			10	10
RINGO Income	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00	£30.00	£30
Free Transactions					0
	<b>£0.00</b>			<b>£44,291.25</b>	<b>£37,300</b>
TOTAL REVENUE	£40,469.17	£59,165.38	£114,189.98	£78,828.00*	

\*Total income from Skye in 2019/20 (split unknown at time of writing)

## Schedule of Tariffs on Skye

Site Ref	Where	Current status	Existing & Proposed Tariff Details		
			When	Time	Cost
PD016	Storr, A855 Roadside, Skye	As Shown	Mon to Sun 8am to 8pm 12 hours Max Stay	Up to 3 hrs Up to 6 Hrs Up to 12 Hrs Coaches per visit	£3.00 £5.00 £7.00 £7.00
PD018	The Quiraing, Roadside, Skye	Unrestricted Free	Mon to Sun 8am to 8pm 12 hours Max Stay	Up to 3 Hrs Up to 6 Hrs Minibus per visit	£3.00 £5.00 £5.00
PD017	Ford Road, Broadford, Skye	Free	Mon to Sun 8am to 6pm 1st March to 31st October 3 hours max stay	Up to 1.0 Hrs Up to 2 Hr Up to 3 Hr	£0.00 £1.00 £2.00
PD019	Lisigarry Court, Portree, Skye	Free	Mon to Sun 8am to 8pm	Up to 3 Hrs Up to 12 Hrs Coach per visit	£3.00 £5.00 £5.00
CP0163	Storr Car Park, Skye	Unrestricted No Charge	Mon to Sun 8am to 8pm 12 hours Max Stay	Up to 3 Hrs Up to 6 Hrs Up to 12 Hrs	£3.00 £5.00 £7.00
CP0164	Portree – Somerled Square - Car Park Short Stay	As Shown	Mon to Sun 8am to 6pm 2 hours Max Stay	Up to 1 Hr Up to 2 Hrs	£1.00 £2.00
CP0165	Portree – The Green - Car Park Short Stay	As shown	Mon to Sun 8am to 6pm 2 hours Max Stay	Up to 1 Hr Up to 2 Hrs	£1.00 £2.00
CP0167	Portree – Bayfield West – Car Park Long Stay	Free	Mon to Sun 8am to 8pm 12 hours Max Stay	Up to 2 hrs Up to 3 Hrs Up to 6 Hrs Up to 12 Hrs	£1.00 £2.00 £3.00 £4.00