

# The Highland Council

|             |          |
|-------------|----------|
| Agenda Item | 5        |
| Report No   | LA/15/24 |

**Committee:** Lochaber Area

**Date:** 27 August 2024

**Report Title:** Fort William 2040 Annual Update

**Report By:** Assistant Chief Executive – Place

## 1 Purpose/Executive Summary

1.1 This report provides an update on the progress of the Fort William 2040 (FW2040) Masterplan and Delivery Programme. Due to a change in personnel and a period when there was no-one in post (August - November 2023), this follows the previous update which was given to Committee in November 2022. A new Project Manager was appointed at the end of November 2023 and since then has been able to progress a range of FW2040 projects including the delivery of a Masterplan for Fort William Town Centre. This report provides updates on all the individual projects within the wider FW2040 vision and sets out key work to be undertaken in the coming year.

## 2 Recommendations

2.1 Members are asked to:

- i. Note the progress that has been made with the individual projects within the FW2040 Masterplan as summarised at **Appendix 1: FW2040 Projects Update July 2024**.
- ii. Note the wider developments that have been implemented in 2023 to enhance the delivery of the programme, specifically:
  - a) An extensive programme of community engagement undertaken on the proposed Fort William Town Centre Masterplan.
  - b) The establishment of a short-life working group to address the traffic and travel impacts resulting from the operation of the canal swing bridge at Banavie.
  - c) Continued engagement on specific issues and with particular interest groups through the FW2040 Community Stakeholder Group and FW2040 Transport Sub-Group.

- iii. Note the extension of the Project Manager post for FW2040 for a further 24-months.
- iv. Support identified priority FW2040 work areas for the coming year as summarised in **section 5** of this report.

### **3 Implications**

- 3.1 **Resource** - resources to cover the salary of the FW2040 Project Manager, update FW2040 online documentation and continue to promote the plan and engage with the local community are allowed for within the Service budget. Funding will be sought for individual projects as they go through feasibility stage. No projects will be initiated until all funding is in place.
- 3.2 **Legal** - the FW2040 Masterplan and Delivery Programme do not form part of the Council's statutory development plan for the area and are therefore very unlikely to be subject to any legal challenge. Individual FW2040 projects and developments will need to address legal requirements as required.
- 3.3 **Risk** - There are no known significant risks associated with this item.
- 3.4 **Health and Safety (risks arising from changes to plant, equipment, process, or people)** - There are no known health and safety risks associated with this item.
- 3.5 **Gaelic** - Gaelic headings will be used in any written publications relating to FW2040.

### **4 Impacts**

- 4.1 In Highland, all policies, strategies or service changes are subject to an integrated screening for impact for Equalities, Poverty and Human Rights, Children's Rights and Wellbeing, Climate Change, Islands and Mainland Rural Communities, and Data Protection. Where identified as required, a full impact assessment will be undertaken.
- 4.2 Considering impacts is a core part of the decision-making process and needs to inform the decision-making process. When taking any decision, Members must give due regard to the findings of any assessment.
- 4.3 **Integrated Impact Assessment - Summary**

An Integrated Impact Assessment (IIA) screening has been undertaken for this proposal on 25 June 2024. The conclusions have been subject to the relevant Manager Review and Approval.

The Screening process has concluded that there are a mix of impacts, specifically positive or neutral / no impact in nature resulting from the FW2040 project. The project seeks to coordinate and deliver a shared vision for the future of Fort William, improving the town and its wider environs as a place to live, work, and visit, and therefore contribute positively to many of the aspects detailed within the IIA process. There is the potential for impacts from individual projects supported under the FW2040 vision to have a positive and negative impact on climate change, however due to the detail needed to understand this impact, this will be more appropriately assessed at the project level or through other future Integrated Impact Assessments. Members are asked to consider the summary in **Appendix**

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**2: Integrated Impact Assessment Screening**, to support the decision-making process.

| <b>Impact Assessment Area</b>    | <b>Conclusion of Screening</b>  |
|----------------------------------|---|
| Equality                         | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Children and Young People – <i>Positive impact</i></li> <li>• Children affected by disability – <i>Positive impact</i></li> <li>• Older adults – <i>Positive impact</i></li> <li>• Other protected characteristics – <i>No impact</i></li> </ul> |
| Socio-economic                   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Prospects and opportunities – <i>Positive impact</i></li> <li>• Places – <i>Positive impact</i></li> <li>• Financial – <i>Positive impact</i></li> </ul>   |
| Human Rights                     | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Human rights – <i>No impact</i></li> </ul>   |
| Children’s Rights and Well-being | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Views of Children and Young People – <i>Positive impact</i></li> <li>• Other Children’s rights – <i>No impact</i></li> </ul>   |
| Island and Mainland Rural        | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Island and Rural Communities – <i>No impact</i></li> </ul>   |
| Climate Change                   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• GHGs and Biodiversity – <i>Positive and potential negative impact</i></li> </ul>   |
| Data Rights                      | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Data protection – <i>No impact</i></li> </ul>  |

## 5 Priorities

### 5.1 Priorities for the coming year for FW2040:

- i. Managing the Fort William town centre master planning work, responding to recommendations that emerge from this work, and instigating work to further the delivery and implementation of proposals.
- ii. Collaborative work to help develop an Integrated Transport Plan for Fort William.
- iii. Ongoing support and development of all projects on the FW2040 Masterplan.
- iv. Further community consultation as to new projects to develop and include in the FW2040 Masterplan.

Designation: Assistant Chief Executive - Place

Date: 08/08/2024

Author: Alison Martin – FW2040 Project Manager

Background Papers: None

Appendices: Appendix 1 - FW2040 Projects Update July 2024

Appendix 2 - IIA Screening Summary FW2040

# FW2040

2020 2030

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## **Annual Masterplan Project Update**

**July 2024**

**Alison Martin**

**FW2040 Project Manager**

## FW2040 Projects: Overview

The table below provide an update on progress with the projects currently on the FW2040 Masterplan. Following extensive consultation in 2018 and 2019, a Masterplan containing **31** projects in total (including sub projects under headings such as Active Travel) was produced. Each of these was designed to contribute to the overall FW2040 Vision for the town. A further **5** projects have since been added. The peak number of Masterplan projects to date has therefore been **36**.

The overview table on the next page lists all projects to date (completed, removed, and currently active). To date, **13** projects have been completed and **3** have been removed from the Masterplan (subject to review should circumstances change and they are deemed viable to progress in the future). There are therefore **20 projects** currently on the Masterplan (including those with multiple stages/phases). These can be broadly categorised as follows:

| Category  | Current FW2040 Masterplan Projects (20)   |
|---|---|
| <b>Completion imminent.</b>   | 1. Upper Achintore Housing - 82 units (LINK Phase 1)<br>2. Primary Schools - Extension to Fort William Primary Schools' Capacities (Bun Sgoil Ghàidhlig Loch Abar)<br>3. Town Centre Revitalisation - Masterplan and Consultation   |
| <b>Works underway on site.</b>  | 4. Blar Mor Phase 2 Housing - 63 units (Stage 1)<br>5. Nevis Forest Mountain Resort - Forest Land Scotland Eco-cabins (Groundworks)<br>6. Active Travel Audit - Delivery of Recommendations   |
| <b>Planning or preparatory work being undertaken by FW2040 Board member organisations.</b>          | 3. Town Centre Revitalisation - Masterplan Delivery and Implementation<br>7. Town Centre Waterfront Enhancement (split between 3. and 10.)<br>8. Road Improvements STAG/STPR2 - Integrated Transport Plan   |
| <b>Planning or preparatory work being undertaken by organisations external to the FW2040 Board.</b> | 9. Upper Achintore Community Facility (U.A.R.G)<br>10. Cruise Ship Reception Facilities (FWMSCIC)<br>11. Smelter Site Expansion (Alvance)   |
| <b>Requires next steps/feasibility review/funding application.</b>                                  | 12. Blar Mor - Land Reserved for Community Use<br>13. Indoor Multi-Purpose Facility (Nevis Centre)<br>14. Helicopter Landing Site<br>15. West Highland Museum - Expansion   |
| <b>Paused / ongoing monitoring.</b>   | 1. Upper Achintore Housing - c. 270 Units.<br>4. Blar Mor Phase 2 Housing - 70 units (Stage 2)<br>16. New Hospital<br>17. STEM Centre<br>18. Local Energy Network<br>19. High School Expansion - Extension to Lochaber High School facilities<br>2. Primary Schools - Extension to Fort William Primary Schools' Capacities (Other)<br>20. Nevis Forest Mountain Resort - Nevis Range |

| All Masterplan Listed Projects to Date (36 peak total inc subs)                            | 13 Completed and 3 Removed<br>(10 original from 2018)<br>(3 added and completed post 2019)<br>(3 removed post 2019) | Current 20 Projects on Masterplan @ May 2024<br>(2 added and in development post 2019)   |
|--|---|--|
| Caol & Lochyside Flood Protection Scheme   | Caol & Lochyside Flood Protection Scheme  |  |
| Nevis Forest Mountain Resort - Visitor Accommodation Nevis Range                           | Nevis Range Visitor Accommodation (Hotel)   |  |
| Town Centre Revitalisation - Cinema  | Town Centre Revitalisation - Cinema   |  |
| Town Centre Revitalisation - Whisky Centre   | Town Centre Revitalisation - Whisky Centre Housing  |  |
| Improved Internet Connection Speeds  | Improved Internet Connection Speeds   |  |
| Soldiers Bridge upgrade  | Soldiers Bridge upgrade   |  |
| Black Parks Active Travel Route  | Black Parks Active Travel Route   |  |
| Thomas Telford Corpach Marina  | Thomas Telford Corpach Marina   |  |
| Bike Carriage By Rail  | Bike Carriage By Rail   |  |
| Blar Mor Phase 1 Housing - c. 120 units  | Blar Mor Phase 1 Housing - 117 units  |  |
| STEM Centre  |   | STEM Centre  |
| New Hospital   |   | New Hospital   |
| Blar Mor Phase 2 Housing - c. 133 units  |   | Blar Mor Phase 2 Housing - 133 units (Stage 1 - 63 units)  |
| Blar Mor - Land Reserved for Community Use   |   | Blar Mor - Land Reserved for Community Use   |
| Local Energy Networks  |   | Local Energy Network   |
| Town Centre Revitalisation- Redevelopment of Belford Site                                  |   | Town Centre Revitalisation - Master Planning (includes re-development of Belford Site- formerly listed as a stand alone project) |
| Town Centre Waterfront - enhancement of marine access, shoreline development and promenade |   | Town Centre Waterfront Enhancement   |
| High School Expansion - Extension to Lochaber High School facilities                       |   | High School Expansion - Extension to Lochaber High School facilities   |
| Smelter Site Expansion   |   | Smelter Site Expansion   |
| Housing Units - Lundavra/ Upper Achintore - circa 350 Units                                |   | Upper Achintore Housing - c. 350 Units (LINK - 82 units)   |
| Upper Achintore Community Facility   |   | Upper Achintore Community Facility   |
| Primary Schools - extension to Fort William Primary Schools' capacities                    |   | Primary Schools - extension to Fort William Primary Schools' capacities  |
| Indoor Multi Purpose Facility (Nevis Centre)   |   | Indoor Multi Purpose Facility (Nevis Centre)   |
| Cruise Ship Reception Facilities   |   | Cruise Ship Reception Facilities   |
| Nevis Forest Mountain Resort - Forest and Land Scotland                                    |   | Nevis Forest Mountain Resort - Forest and Land Scotland  |
| Nevis Forest Mountain Resort - Nevis Range   |   | Nevis Forest Mountain Resort - Nevis Range   |
| Fort William Active Travel Audit   |   | Fort William Active Travel Audit - delivery of recommendations   |
| Road Improvements STAG/ STPR2  |   | Road Improvements STAG/STPR2 - Integrated Management Plan (ITP)  |
| Helicopter Landing Site  |   | Helicopter Landing Site  |
| West Highland Museum Expansion   |   | West Highland Museum Expansion   |
| Former Secondary School Site (completed 2018 but subsequently included under FW2040)       | Former Secondary School Site (completed 2018 but subsequently counted as a FW2040 achievement)                      |  |
| Tweeddale and Lochaber House developments  | Tweeddale and Lochaber House developments   |  |
| E-Bike scheme  | E-Bike scheme   |  |
| Tailrace - Kayak Competition and Training Facility   | Tailrace - Kayak Competition and Training Facility  |  |
| Corpach Port Expansion   | Canal Related Tourism Projects  |  |
| Canal Related Tourism Projects   | Corpach Port Expansion  |  |
|  |   |  |
|  |   | <b>KEY</b>   |
|  |   | Added post 2019  |
|  |   | Current projects   |
|  |   | Removed projects (but could be reincorporated)   |
|  |   | Removed projects (definitive)  |



## Active Projects Making Fort William A Great Place to Live

| STEM Centre  |   |  |   |   |
|--------------|---|--|---|---|
| Date         | Progress Reported   | By Whom                                      | Next Steps  | Further Information   |
| July 2024    | The Full Business Case for a STEM centre located at Blar Mhor was approved by the Scottish Funding Council in 2018, subject to funding availability. Since that time, the opportunity to purchase and redevelop 2.5ha of land and buildings adjacent to the Fort William campus (land and buildings largely comprising the old Underwater Centre) has arisen. This has allowed a refresh of the STEM centre options appraisal. An Outline Business Case has now been made for this campus development which would provide space for STEM, digital and construction training, and a 27-bed residence building thus capitalising and expanding on the success of courses and training already delivered whilst providing a physical link to assets such as the Advancing Manufacturing Centre and the loch. Parallel discussions continue about the potential to develop health specific R&D opportunities at the Blar Mhor location in conjunction with the NHS. | Dave Campbell, Project Director for STEM     | UHI NW+H to progress with ongoing updates to the FW2040 Project Manager for update to FW2040 Board. | To be provided as proposals develop.  |
| New Hospital |   |  |   |   |
| Date         | Progress Reported   | By Whom                                      | Next Steps  | Further Information   |
| July 2024    | Following the announcement of a funding freeze for capital projects there has been no further progress on the New Belford which been taken to RIBA Stage 2 (initial Concept Design) by contractors Balfour Beatty. There has been strong community representation to try and secure commitment to allow design work to be ongoing to RIBA Stage 3 (rather than a complete stop on all   | Karen-Anne Wilson, Lochaber District Manager | NHS to progress with ongoing updates to the FW2040 Project Manager for update to FW2040 Board.      | <a href="#">Service model for new hospital   NHS Highland (scot.nhs.uk)</a> |

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|  | work) with the aim to get the project 'shovel ready' for when funding can be released. So far this has been unsuccessful. The NHS redesign of health and social care is ongoing. This process includes the project for replacing the Belford Hospital but is also looking at wider service change throughout Lochaber. |  |  |  |
|--|--|--|--|--|

**Second Phase Housing - Up to 133 Housing Units, Blar Mhor**

| Date             | Progress Reported  | By Whom                                    | Next Steps  | Further Information |
|------------------|--|--|---|---------------------|
| <b>July 2024</b> | Phase 2 of housing on the Blar is under development. Work is ongoing to link this phase with the existing medical centre, the recently completed Phase 1 housing, and the new hospital (currently on hold). A preferred bus route has been made a condition of planning which provides a one-way link from the LHS T-junction to the roundabout. The mixed tenure homes in Phase 2 are due to be developed in three stages linked to the wider Blar development plans. Currently construction of the first of those stages is well underway which will see the delivery of 63 homes, due for completion early 2025. The residual stages will be on hold until such time as the hospital design is formalised (allowing incorporation of aspects such as key worker housing). | Helen Cameron, Housing Development Manager | HC to progress with ongoing updates to the FW2040 Project Manager for update to FW2040 Board. |                     |

**Land reserved for community use on Blar Mhor development**

| Date             | Progress Reported  | By Whom  | Next Steps  | Further Information                          |
|------------------|--|--|---|--|
| <b>July 2023</b> | Approximately 2ha of the land owned by the Council at Blar Mhor is designated for Community Use within the approved Masterplan. The area has been prepared for development in terms of a building platform and is accessible from the existing road network - uses to be determined. | Allan Maguire - Head of Development & Regeneration | HC to progress with ongoing updates to the FW2040 Project Manager for update to FW2040 Board. | To be provided as proposals for use develop. |

**Local Energy Networks**

| Date | Progress Reported | By Whom | Next Steps | Further Information |
|------|-------------------|---------|------------|---------------------|
|      |                   |         |            |                     |



|                  |  |                     |   |   |
|------------------|--|---------------------|---|---|
| <b>July 2024</b> | Stage 1 assessment at Blar Mhor examined whether there could be sufficient demand and the number of end users who would use heat from any potential network. Plans to progress this to Stage 2 and assess the technical detail of potential heat generation/to demand have been put on hold reflecting varying progress in the component projects on the Blar. Specifically, developments with the STEM Centre (an original key driver for the LEN) and the decision to use air source heat pumps for the housing developments have changed the demand profile. It is considered likely that any further LEN investigations would need to be driven by an end user such as the NHS (in parallel to the development of the hospital) if considered appropriate. | Scott Dingwall, HIE | FW2040 Project Manager to keep a watching brief in collaboration with HIE on any future LEN developments. | To be provided as and when any proposals develop. |
|------------------|--|---------------------|---|---|

**Town Centre Revitalisation Master Planning - (includes re-development of Belford Hospital site, formerly a stand-alone project)**

|                  |  |                        |  |  |
|------------------|--|------------------------|--|--|
| <b>July 2024</b> | Community engagement on the Town Centre Masterplan has recently concluded with an estimated 500-600 people engaging with the plans including 192 high school pupils. Collation of all the feedback has been ongoing in partnership with the architects for incorporation into the Masterplan. In general, the plans have been well received but key concerns remain about the practicalities of funding and deliverability and specifically the proposals for the A82 to reduce lanes/increase pedestrian crossings. Work is now underway between the commissioning partners on delivery and implementation, and which proposals to prioritise. A summary of the community engagement feedback will be made publicly available on the FW2040 webpages. Further information will also be published on 1) Design team and commissioning partner response, and 2) Next steps for delivery and implementation. | FW2040 Project Manager | An analysis of achievability and the identification of potential initial projects within the Masterplan is required which can progress to feasibility, options appraisal, or business case work. At appropriate stages this further community and stakeholder consultation will be undertaken. | All information about the Masterplan and community engagement can be found at: <a href="https://www.highland.gov.uk/fw2040">https://www.highland.gov.uk/fw2040</a> |
|------------------|--|------------------------|--|--|

**Town Centre Waterfront - Enhancement of marine access, shoreline development and promenade**

| <b>Date</b>      | <b>Progress Reported</b>  | <b>By Whom</b>         | <b>Next Steps</b>  | <b>Further Information</b>           |
|------------------|---|------------------------|--|--------------------------------------|
| <b>July 2024</b> | Waterfront improvements/proposed developments have been incorporated in the Town Centre Master-planning process detailed above. Specific plans developed by the Fort William Marina and Shoreline Community Interest Company (FWMSCIC) are detailed | FW2040 Project Manager | To maintain links between potential waterfront developments e.g., at the West End or Town Pier | To be provided as proposals develop. |

|   | as a separate item below. The plans are currently illustrative but complementary.  |   | and the work on the Town Centre Masterplan.  |   |
|---|--|---|--|---|
| <b>High School Expansion - Extension to Lochaber High School facilities</b> |  |   |  |   |
| <b>Date</b>   | <b>Progress reported</b>   | <b>By Whom</b>                                | <b>Next Steps</b>  | <b>Further Information</b>  |
| <b>July 2023</b>  | No work currently scheduled. Capacity is monitored annually as part of school roll forecasts.  | HC Estates                                    | HC to progress with ongoing updates to the FW2040 Project Manager for update to FW2040 Board.      | To be provided as proposals develop.  |
| <b>Smelter Site Expansion</b>   |  |   |  |   |
| <b>Date</b>   | <b>Progress Reported</b>   | <b>By Whom</b>                                | <b>Next Steps</b>  | <b>Further Information</b>  |
| <b>July 2024</b>  | Plans for a new recycling facility and aluminium billet plant at Fort William smelter are in development by Alvanca Aluminium Group. Full planning permission was approved in September 2021. Work is currently underway on the detailed design of the plant and the refinement of its business case. A dedicated project team are working on site and continue to meet milestones for the project. It is anticipated that the development will lead to the creation of up to 45 direct jobs.  | James Tangney,<br>Lead Engineer               | Alvanca to progress with ongoing updates to the FW2040 Project Manager for update to FW2040 Board. | <a href="#">The Future   ALVANCA British Aluminium</a>  |
| <b>Housing Units - Lundavra/ Upper Achintore- circa 350 Units</b>           |  |   |  |   |
| <b>Date</b>   | <b>Progress Reported</b>   | <b>By Whom</b>                                | <b>Next Steps</b>  | <b>Further Information</b>  |
| <b>July 2024</b>  | This project aimed to deliver up to 350 new homes in the Lundavra/upper Achintore area of town, through a range of phases/sub-projects. Phase 1, a LINK housing project is near completion with 82 homes available by summer 2024. Originally a second phase was expected to follow on (circa 270 units), however funding for future phases has not been agreed due to a combination of development costs and funding availability and further phases are on hold. Lochaber Housing Association is appraising the project and are due to report on their assessment of deliverability. | Helen Cameron,<br>Housing Development Manager | HC to progress with ongoing updates to the FW2040 Project Manager for update to FW2040 Board.      | <a href="https://linkhousing.org.uk/upperachintore/">https://linkhousing.org.uk/upperachintore/</a> |

| Upper Achintore Community Facility                                      |   |   |  |   |
|---|---|---|--|---|
| Date  | Progress Reported   | By Whom   | Next Steps   | Further Information   |
| June 2024   | The Community Hub Business Plan consultation was completed at the end February. The feasibility study consultants have provided the Upper Achintore Regeneration Group (UARG) with costings and analysis and the group are awaiting hard copies as specified within the original brief. The UARG have commitment from HIE to allow a Land Transfer to a suitably constituted Community Hub Group pending the outcome of the business case. They also have agreement from HC Planning that the preferred land at Heathercroft is suited for a Hub. However, plans require a new group to take things forward e.g., a SCIO. The UARG, as a Registered Tenant's Organisation, are not suitably constituted for Asset Transfers, land ownership, employment etc. The group is struggling somewhat (time and capacity), and a priority is to meet and discussed how to promote the project (e.g., press and facebook) to try and get more people involved. | Mark Linfield, Chair<br>Upper Achintore<br>Community<br>Regeneration<br>Group | UARG to progress with ongoing updates to the FW2040 Project Manager for update to FW2040 Board.<br><br>Next stage if the Business Case is good is to identify / establish an appropriate new group to take things forward and then pursue support to identify capital funding. | Mabbet Community Consultation<br><a href="#">UARG-EXHIBITION-BOARDS.pdf</a><br><a href="http://ghjohnston.co.uk">ghjohnston.co.uk</a> |
| Primary Schools - Extension to Fort William Primary Schools' Capacities |   |   |  |   |
| Date  | Progress Reported   | By Whom   | Next Steps   | Further Information   |
| July 2024   | In May 2023 there was a confirmed expansion for the Gaelic primary school (Bun-Sgoil Ghaidhlig Loch Abar) to cope with an increasing school role. A 2-classroom extension is currently under construction due for completion by August 2024. No other work is scheduled. Capacity is monitored annually as part of school roll forecasts.   | HC Estates  | HC to progress with ongoing updates to the FW2040 Project Manager for update to FW2040 Board.  |   |
| Indoor Multi-Purpose Facility   |   |   |  |   |
| Date  | Progress Reported   | By Whom   | Next Steps   | Further Information   |
| July 2024   | The potential to undertake a feasibility study on leisure and cultural provision in Fort William is to be discussed with HC colleagues and partner organisations as part of a wider discussion  | Chris Heardman,<br>Nevis Centre<br>Board Chair                                | Re-development of the Nevis Centre / Leisure Centre is a key proposal in   | To be provided as proposals develop   |

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|  | <p>on the deliverability of the Fort William Town Centre Masterplan (of which cultural and leisure facilities are one component). This work would build on discussions initiated in November 2022 between Highlife Highland (HLH), HC, HIE and the Nevis Centre Board. There are ongoing maintenance problems for both Lochaber Leisure Centre and the Nevis Centre (with the Nevis Centre board successful in a recent bid to the CRF for £76,840 for critical roof repairs). Neither building is considered fit for purpose but there are no plans at present to pursue funding/developing a business case by either organisation for new buildings. The Town Centre Masterplan proposals which include options for new Events/Civic space and a new Leisure Centre were very well received. The exact division of facilities, location, parking, and the practicalities of maintaining services/revenue streams by staging construction all require careful consideration.</p> | <p>and<br/> Gary Davidson,<br/> Lochaber Leisure<br/> Centre Manager</p> <p>and<br/> FW2040 Project<br/> Manager</p> | <p>the Town Centre Masterplan. FW2040 Project Manager to progress discussions between HC, HIE, HLH and the NC to explore options for both facilities within the context of the Masterplan proposals.</p> |  |
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# FW2040

## Active Projects Making Fort William A Place Facing Water

| Cruise Ship Reception Facilities - Ongoing Monitoring |   |                        |   |   |
|---|---|------------------------|---|---|
| Date  | Progress Reported   | By Whom                | Next Steps  | Further Information   |
| June 2024   | <p>Initial pontoons (for tender berthing) installed by FWMSCIC to enable cruise ships to come to Fort William - operational since Aug 22. Sheltering facilities also provided in the West End Car Park. The pontoons were extended in 2023 to enable overnight berthing for small, local, and visiting boats and vessels. FWMSCIC are now working on trying to install toilets in the West End Car Park – a planning application has been submitted and discussions on service locations (water and waste) are ongoing. This will be a mobile design so could be easily re-located should future developments require.</p> <p>A feasibility study examining potential options for the development of expanded marina facilities on the waterfront was completed last year. This study looked at potential development options for the waterfront that could be available from three different quantities of potential Coire Glass rock extract, ranging from low to high. At this stage no final decisions have yet been made with regard to engineering options for Coire Glass, potential volumes of extracted rock, nor potential uses or disposal options for this although recent discussion indicate SSE plan to use as much as possible on-site.</p> | Sarah Kennedy, FWMSCIC | FW2040 Project Manager to ensure links with the wider Town Centre Masterplan work (see the separate Masterplan item above) for update to the Board. | <a href="#">Fort William Marina &amp; Shoreline Community Interest Company - Home</a><br><a href="http://fwmsc.co.uk">fwmsc.co.uk</a> |

# FW2040

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## Active Projects Making Fort William A Connected Place

| Nevis Forest Mountain Resort- Forest and Land Scotland |  |  |   |   |
|--|--|--|---|---|
| Date   | Progress Reported  | By Whom  | Next Steps  | Further Information   |
| May 2024   | The main focus of FLS work under the Nevis Forest and Mountain Resort Masterplan has been to work with Forest Holidays on their proposed development of 50 forest eco-cabins. Site investigations have been undertaken and FLS and Forest Holidays are now working on agreeing a lease for the site. The other elements of the masterplan: a hotel and low impact accommodation are on hold until the Forest Holidays development is complete and market conditions are in a place to ensure the best outcomes for Lochaber. The potential for further recreational improvements will also follow on the back of the Forest Holiday development. | Robbie Layden,<br>Regional Visitor Services Manager,<br>Forestry and Land Scotland | Forest cabin lease agreement imminent with recreational improvements long term.<br><br>FLS to progress with ongoing updates to the FW2040 Project Manager for update to FW2040 Board. | <a href="https://forestryandland.gov.scot/images/corporate/pdf/nevis-forest-and-mountain-resort-masterplan.pdf">https://forestryandland.gov.scot/images/corporate/pdf/nevis-forest-and-mountain-resort-masterplan.pdf</a> |
| Nevis Forest Mountain Resort- Nevis Range              |  |  |   |   |
| Date   | Progress Reported  | By Whom  | Next Steps  | Further Information   |
| June 2024  | Work began in October 2021 on a £4M project at Nevis Range expected to create up to 50 new full and part time jobs. A key component is the creation of new visitor accommodation and in April 2023 a 26 room the 'Base Camp' hotel opened. A new bar and restaurant, bike shop, retail shop, and a covered courtyard with event space have also opened plus a 100-seat capacity conference and training facility. In addition to the availability of overnight car parking for self-contained vehicles in the main car park, a purpose-built Campervan Park with 15 pitches also   | Chris O'Brien,<br>Managing Director,<br>Nevis Range Mountain Experience            | Nevis Range to progress with ongoing updates to the FW2040 Project Manager for update to FW2040 Board.  | <a href="https://www.nevisrange.co.uk/accommodation/hotel/">https://www.nevisrange.co.uk/accommodation/hotel/</a>   |

|   | opened in 2024 offering electrical hook up connections and waste disposal facilities.  |  |   |  |
|---|--|--|---|--|
| <b>Fort William Active Travel Audit</b> |  |  |   |  |
| <b>Date</b>                             | <b>Progress Reported</b>   | <b>By Whom</b>   | <b>Next Steps</b>   | <b>Further Information</b>   |
| <b>June 2024</b>                        | <p>Since 2021 the following key infrastructure Active Travel has been delivered:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Black Parks AT Route becomes traffic-free with lighting and signage installed.</li> <li>• The Caol &amp; Lochside Flood Protection Scheme with AT Route is completed.</li> <li>• A830 path widening around High School.</li> <li>• A830 Corpach to Loch Linnhe Holiday Park path with lighting completed.</li> </ul> <p>Current AT work programme for 2024-25 includes resurfacing of the town centre underpass steps and handrail, the purchase and installation of mechanical bollards to control access to the High Street, and improvements to the footway from the Old Fort to the College including tactile paving and drop kerbs. Bike storage racks and a canopy have also recently been installed at the West End Car Park (Feb 2024).</p> <p>BEAR is currently progressing investigation and design for AT adjacent to the A830 between A82 Fort William Roundabout and Banavie Swing Bridge. Construction of the first phase of improvements at the A830 / B8006 Junction, opposite Lochaber High School will commence in September 2024. BEAR have also undertaken a road safety speed limit review, with consultation on 20mph pilot project and orders progressed for speed limit reductions to 30mph on A830 &amp; A82.</p> <p>In May 2023, the company running the HI-BIKES - Bewegen filed for bankruptcy, resulting in most HI-BIKE schemes folding. Fortunately, HITRANS Inverness took the Fort William scheme</p> | <p>Julie Cromarty,<br/>Team Leader<br/>Sustainable<br/>Transport</p> <p>and</p> <p>Vikki Trelfer-<br/>HITRANS</p> <p>and</p> <p>Emma Walters,<br/>Lochaber<br/>Environmental<br/>Group</p> <p>and</p> <p>Chris Finlay at HI-<br/>BIKES</p> | <p>Active Travel summary pending for presentation at the next TSG.</p> <p>HC and HITRANS to progress with ongoing updates to the FW2040 Project Manager for update to FW2040 Board.</p> | <p><a href="https://hi-bike.co.uk/">https://hi-bike.co.uk/</a></p> |

|  |   |  |  |  |
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|  | <p>on. There are no plans for additional hubs or expansion of the scheme at present. The scheme is well used and as of 25/1/2024 there are nearly 1,000 regular users and there have been 12,000 single use users purchasing either a 3-hr pass or a pay per ride pass. 220,000 km have been travelled which results in an estimated 30,448 kilograms of CO2 saved.</p> |  |  |  |
|--|---|--|--|--|

**Road Improvements: STAG/STPR2**

| Date                    | Progress Reported  | By Whom  | Next Steps  | Further Information   |
|-------------------------|--|--|---|---|
| <p><b>July 2024</b></p> | <p>Transport Scotland (TS) are still working on the mobilisation of resources to shape and deliver their strategic transport priorities as recommended in STPR2. Specifically, work is ongoing on a delivery plan to progress the recommendations in the report, and an associated prioritisation process to programme all the work across the country is underway - there is still no confirmed date for this at present.</p> <p>The key recommendation for Fort William (no.32 in STPR2) was the development of an integrated Transport Plan (ITP) to address the ongoing range of issues and concerns with traffic and transport in, and through the town. To help expedite the process, HIE agreed to assist in the development of a consultancy brief which could be put out to tender to develop an evidence base for the ITP. A draft of this brief is currently with TS for review. Discussions are also ongoing between TS and Local Agencies (HC, HIE and HITRANS) to confirm an agreed approach to the ITP, both in terms of scope and governance. Local agencies have undertaken a review of the historic transport assessment work completed for the A82 to help identify the gaps/appropriate focus for the ITP.</p> | <p>Kirsty Davison,<br/>Senior Transport Planner</p> <p>and</p> <p>Nicola Blaney,<br/>Interim Head of Strategic Transport Planning</p> <p>and</p> <p>FW2040 Project Manager</p> | <p>Update on the ITP to be provided as a separate item as part of the Board meeting 04/03/24.</p> <p>Collaborative work with Transport Scotland, through FW2040 Board and Transport Sub-Group, to assist them in the development of their integrated transport plan for Fort William.</p> <p>Updates to be provided by the FW2040 Project Manager for update to FW2040 Board.</p> | <p><a href="#">Strategic Transport Projects Review 2   Transport Scotland</a></p> |

**Helicopter Landing Site – Fort William**

| Date | Progress Reported | By Whom | Next Steps | Further Information |
|------|-------------------|---------|------------|---------------------|
|------|-------------------|---------|------------|---------------------|



|                 |   |   |   |  |
|-----------------|---|---|---|--|
| <b>May 2024</b> | A suitable location for a permanent site for a helicopter landing site (HLS) to be utilised for Air Ambulance and Search and Rescue has been ongoing for several years. NHS have confirmed they will not build a landing site as part of the new hospital. Identification of a site now more urgent due to increased commercial interest in current landing site at Carr's Corner. A possible permanent site has been identified in the Glen Nevis area – partners are progressing discussions with Jahama Estates and HELP appeal. | Dot Ferguson, HC Senior Community Development Manager | HC to progress with ongoing updates to the FW2040 Project Manager for update to FW2040 Board. | To be provided as proposals for use develop. |
|-----------------|---|---|---|--|



## Completed Projects Making Fort William A Great Place to Live

| Caol & Lochyside Flood Protection Scheme   |   |   |   |
|--|---|---|---|
| Date   | Summary   | Next Steps  | Further Information   |
| Dec 2023   | Flood protection works are complete and official scheme opening took place on 31 <sup>st</sup> August 2023. Some limited remedial works are being completed this year.  | Project complete - no further reporting envisaged.  | <a href="#">Caol and Lochyside flood protection scheme   Flood alleviation schemes   The Highland Council</a>   |
| First Phase Housing - 117 Housing Units on Blar Mhor   |   |   |   |
| Completed  | Summary   | Next Steps  | Further Information   |
| Nov 2023   | Phase 1 of housing on the Blar is complete with 117 homes delivered.  | Project complete - no further reporting envisaged. Phase 2 of housing is a separate item (see Active Projects).       |   |
| Nevis Forest Mountain Resort - Additional Visitor Accommodation (Hotel and Campervan Facilities) |   |   |   |
| Completed  | Summary   | Next Steps  | Further Information   |
| Apr 2023   | Development of a hotel with 24 bedrooms, bar and restaurant, bike shop, gift shop and covered courtyard with an event space completed. A 15-pitch campervan park with electrical hook up connections and waste disposal facilities also completed with facilities opened in April 2023. | Monitor position with regard to Forest Holidays log cabin development which is a separate item (see Active Projects). | <a href="#">Developing for the future at Nevis Range! - Nevis Range Nevis Range Campervan Park in Fort William, Highlands - book online now (campsites.co.uk)</a>   |
| Town Centre Revitalisation - Tweeddale House & Lochaber House Re-development                     |   |   |   |
| Completed  | Summary   | Next Steps  | Further Information   |
| Oct 2022   | Tweeddale House and Lochaber House re-developments creating 37 new town centre flats in total, completed in October 2022.   | Project complete - no further reporting envisaged.  | <a href="https://www.highland.gov.uk/news/article/10349/tweeddale_tenants_revitalise_fort_william_town_centre">https://www.highland.gov.uk/news/article/10349/tweeddale_tenants_revitalise_fort_william_town_centre</a> |

| Improved Internet Connection Speeds   |   |  |   |
|---|---|--|---|
| Completed   | Summary   | Next Steps   | Further Information   |
| Mar 2022  | Through the Building Digital UK (BDUK) Local Full Fibre Networks (LFFN) programme Fort William benefitted from full fibre connections being provided to public buildings. HIE funding secured additional benefits by also connecting Banavie Primary School, which provided an opportunity to support businesses in Banavie and Corpach and ensured the fibre optic link could be bridged across the canal to Lochaber High School. This was part of a wider four-year LFFN project across Inverness, Fort William, Thurso, and Wick completed on the 9th March 2022. | Monitor further opportunities for expansion        | <a href="#">Public sector and business to benefit from new multi-million-pound full fibre broadband investment   The Highland Council</a> |
| Town Centre Revitalisation - Highland Cinema  |   |  |   |
| Completed   | Summary   | Next Steps   | Further Information   |
| Sept 2020   | The two-screen cinema with café and bar opened in September 2020 in Cameron Square. Screen 1 has a capacity of 109, with screen 2 having a capacity of 62. Café/ bar area seats 84, with an outdoor covered terrace overlooking the square. The Cinema is well used for a range of screenings and presentations and on the 23rd November 2023, Highland Cinema was named 'UK Cinema of the Year' at the 'Big Screen Awards' ceremony held in London.  | Project complete - no further reporting envisaged. | <a href="#">Our Story - The Highland Cinema</a>   |
| Town Centre Revitalisation - Whisky Centre Housing Development                      |   |  |   |
| Completed   | Summary   | Next Steps   | Further Information   |
| Nov 2019  | Project complete with twelve flats for affordable rent constructed. First tenants moved into Macbrayne Apartments in November 2019.   | Project complete - no further reporting envisaged. | <a href="#">Kearney Donald Partnership   Macbrayne Apartments, Fort William (kd-partnership.co.uk)</a>                                    |
| Town Centre Revitalisation - Former Fort William Secondary and Primary School Sites |   |  |   |
| Completed   | Summary   | Next Steps   | Further Information   |
| September 2018  | Re-development of derelict site at entrance to town the location of the former Fort William High School and Fort William Primary. The renovated buildings now host the Highland Council and HIE offices, Lochaber Archive Centre, Jobcentre Plus, Highland Council service point and registration office.   | Project complete - no further reporting envisaged. | <a href="#">Highland council takes up residence in new home   Robertson</a>   |



# FW2040

2020 2030

2050



## Completed Projects Making Fort William **A Place Facing Water**

| Corpach Canal Entrance Marina (Thomas Telford Corpach Marina) - 40 Berth Marina |  |  |   |
|---|--|--|---|
| Completed   | Summary  | Next Steps   | Further Information   |
| Apr 2023  | The 45-berth facility was opened on 18 April 2023 and includes parking, café and showering facilities. | Monitor opportunities to support potential development of water taxis and any other ways the marina can contribute to the FW2040 Vision. | <a href="https://www.corpachmarina.co.uk/">https://www.corpachmarina.co.uk/</a> |



## Completed Projects Making Fort William A Connected Place

| Bike Carriage by Rail - local use of rail coaches that can accommodate bikes |   |  |  |
|--|---|--|--|
| Date   | Progress Reported   | Next Steps   | Further Information  |
| May 2023   | ScotRail ran the first of its Highland Explorer carriages, with 20 cycle spaces (a UK first), on the Mallaig branch of the West Highland Line on the 19 April 2023. The class 153 carriages operate on two services each day - the early morning service from Mallaig to Glasgow Queen Street and the evening Glasgow Queen Street to Mallaig. Northbound services run Mon-Fri while south bound run Tue-Sat. The carriages mean customers benefit from 15% more seats, more luggage space and access to an additional toilet on board. The carriages also feature table maps detailing the route, with recommendations on where to walk, cycle and visit. Scotrail have also removed the additional charge for its Highland Explorer ticket. Customers can now purchase a Highland Explorer ticket for the price of a standard class fare. For the UCI Cycling Championships there were an additional three return trips put on using class 153 carriages. | Project complete - no further reporting envisaged.   | <a href="#">ScotRail Highland Explorer   ScotRail</a>  |
| Black Parks Improved Active Travel Connection                                |   |  |  |
| Date   | Progress Reported   | Next Steps   | Further Information  |
| Oct 2022   | Improvement works complete across the Black Parks, including surfacing and drainage improvements, turning areas, footpath work to rear of Ben Nevis Hotel, traffic bollards, street lighting, signage.  | Improvements to the connections at either end of the Black Parks route - through Inverlochry from Railway Station and onward through Caol (this will be addressed by the flood defence works). | <a href="#">HiBike (hi-bike.co.uk)</a><br><a href="#">HITRANS - Highlands and Islands Transport Partnership</a><br><a href="#">Spaces for People: Making essential travel and exercise safer during Covid -19   The Highland Council</a> |
| Active Travel - Hi Bikes   |   |  |  |

| Date   | Progress Reported  | Next Steps   | Further Information   |
|--|--|--|---|
| <b>Apr 2022</b>  | HIBIKE Fort William Scheme launched in April 2022. In its first year of operation, between 4th April 2022 and 3rd April 2023, the Hi-Bikes had been ridden a total of 28,689 miles on 9068 rides. Ongoing monitoring of usage is currently undertaken by Lochaber Environmental Group.   | Explore opportunities to expand number of bikes and docking stations. See update provided as part of Active Travel item. | <a href="http://hi-bike.co.uk">HiBike (hi-bike.co.uk)</a>                 |
| <b>Soldier's Bridge - Improved Active Travel Connection Across River Lochy</b> |  |  |   |
| Date   | Progress reported  | Next Steps   | Further Information   |
| <b>Aug 2018</b>  | The Soldiers Bridge re-opened to the public in August 2018, following the completion of a £560,000 renovation. The two-year project was delivered by Highland Council with funding from Transport Scotland through Sustrans Scotland's National Cycle Network Development Fund. It saw the replacement of the bridge deck and handrails as well as the northern and southern ramps. The improvements mean the bridge is now fully accessible to all users, and it is intended the upgrades will make it easier and safer for residents and visitors to explore the local area. Bridge lighting was subsequently delivered with HiTrans as part of the Caol & Lochside Flood Protection Scheme community benefit works. | Project complete - no further actions envisaged.   | <a href="#">Soldiers Bridge re-opens to public   The Highland Council</a> |

## ***Report Appendix 2: Integrated Impact Screening Summary FW2040***

The integrated impact assessment (IIA) screening process completed on the 25 July 2024 (FS-Case-633516164), has concluded that there are a mix of impacts, specifically positive or neutral / no impact in nature, resulting from the FW2040 project.

The project seeks to coordinate and deliver a shared vision for the future of Fort William, improving the town and its wider environs as a place to live, work, and visit, and therefore contribute positively to many of the aspects detailed within the IIA process. There is the potential for impacts from individual projects supported under the FW2040 vision to have a positive but also a negative impact on climate change, especially through new infrastructure and physical development, however due to the detail needed to understand this impact, this will be more appropriately assessed at the project level or through other future Integrated Impact Assessments.

More detail on those IIA aspects for which a positive or negative impact was identified through screening is provided below.

### Equality, Poverty and Human Rights

The screening notes that FW2040 will primarily have a neutral impact on those with protected characteristics e.g., race or gender. Projects within FW2040 are all designed to improve the town as a place to live, work and visit, and this therefore will include specific consideration so that the needs of all ages and abilities are met and resulting in a positive impact on children and young people, older adults and those with disabilities.

With a focus on improving Fort William as a place to live, work and visit, FW2040 will both directly and indirectly have a positive impact on a variety of socio-economic factors, such as quality of the environment, transport and housing infrastructure, and employment opportunities.

### Children's Rights

Through screening it has been identified that most children's rights will not be impacted by FW2040. Several aspects will, however, be impacted positively. Specifically, during engagement events, the views of children and young people will be sought directly, and the needs of children will be considered across projects e.g. active travel, new leisure facilities, and school capacities.

### Climate Change

The FW2040 vision seeks to deliver a range of projects to improve the town. Production of the vision itself has no impact on climate change, however, individual projects within the FW2040 Masterplan, especially new infrastructure and physical development have the potential to create GHGs and affect wildlife and biodiversity both positively and negatively.



For developments of sufficient scale or scope, these aspects will be addressed at the project level subject to strict criteria on significant environmental impacts and their mitigation. The vision incorporates the ambition for net zero in line with Scottish Government guidance and a range of specific projects provide direct positive impacts such as flood protection, increasing opportunities for active travel, building re-use and refurbishment, and local energy networks.