



Glenmore Outline Masterplan
Glenmore, Cairngorms
May 2014 - DRAFT 05

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01 Introduction

Introduction

Glenmore Forest Park is an iconic place at the heart of the Cairngorms National Park. Cairngorm Mountain and Glenmore are, together with neighbouring Rothiemurchus, one of the most visited destinations in Scotland, attracting 1.4 million visits annually. This represents around 40% of visits to the entire National Park.

The natural environment is outstanding with the mountain plateau, Caledonian pinewoods and Loch Morlich with its stunning beach. These are internationally important for nature and home to iconic species such as Capercaillie and Dotterel.

Forestry Commission Scotland (FCS) and the Cairngorms National Park Authority (CNPA) have led on the development, working with key partners, of a masterplan for Glenmore Forest Park which sets out the vision for creating a world class visitor experience to match the world class environment, to protect and enhance the outstanding nature and landscape and boost the tourism economy.

The outline masterplan identifies key elements for the re-development of a visitor hub alongside upgrading and consolidating existing infrastructure at Glenmore. This will establish Glenmore as a focus for informal outdoor activity and provide a major orientation point for visitors to the National Park. The intention is that this area will provide a resource which will benefit businesses across Strathspey and will complement visitor facilities elsewhere in the National Park.

Glenmore Forest Park, managed by FCS, and Cairngorm Mountain, managed by Highlands and Islands Enterprise (HIE), are both in public ownership. In a recent exciting development CNPA, FCS, Highlands and Islands Enterprise (HIE), Scottish Natural Heritage (SNH) and The Highland Council (THC) have announced a new partnership to develop a more co-ordinated approach for the publicly owned land at Cairngorm Mountain and Estate and Glenmore Forest Park. This will include extending the masterplan approach up the hill to Cairngorm Mountain. It will help deliver an exemplar of sustainable development at the heart of the Cairngorms National Park.



Loch Morlich on the approach to Glenmore

Purpose and Approach

The purposes of this masterplan are to:

- Outline the long term role and direction for Glenmore Forest Park in the context of the wider area in terms of visitor provision and experience
- Explain how the vision of creating a world class visitor experience can be delivered
- Outline a long term spatial plan to support a world class experience
- Outline the scope of a programme of more detailed work
- Inform future investment and decision making by partners

The masterplan draws on existing strategies and visitor surveys prepared by the Cairngorms, Rothiemurchus and Glenmore Group (CRAGG), CNPA and FCS. It has been prepared jointly by FCS and CNPA through a process of:

1. Establishing “success criteria”: the desired outputs and outcomes to be delivered, which have been reviewed and updated throughout the masterplanning process.
2. Consulting local stakeholders through an initial Glenmore options appraisal in 2011-12, Local Development Plan consultations in 2011 and 2013, and discussions with individual organisations in late 2013/early 2014.
3. Analysing local context: visitor behaviour, current facilities, aspirations of key stakeholders, landscape, nature, access, transport and policy/strategy context.
4. Generating and assessing options for the future: six different options for provision of visitor facilities in Glenmore and related improvements (appendix ii)
5. Identifying the preferred option and the actions required to deliver it.
6. Agreeing to test the preferred option with local stakeholders, using this document as a basis.

More details of this process can be found in appendix ii.

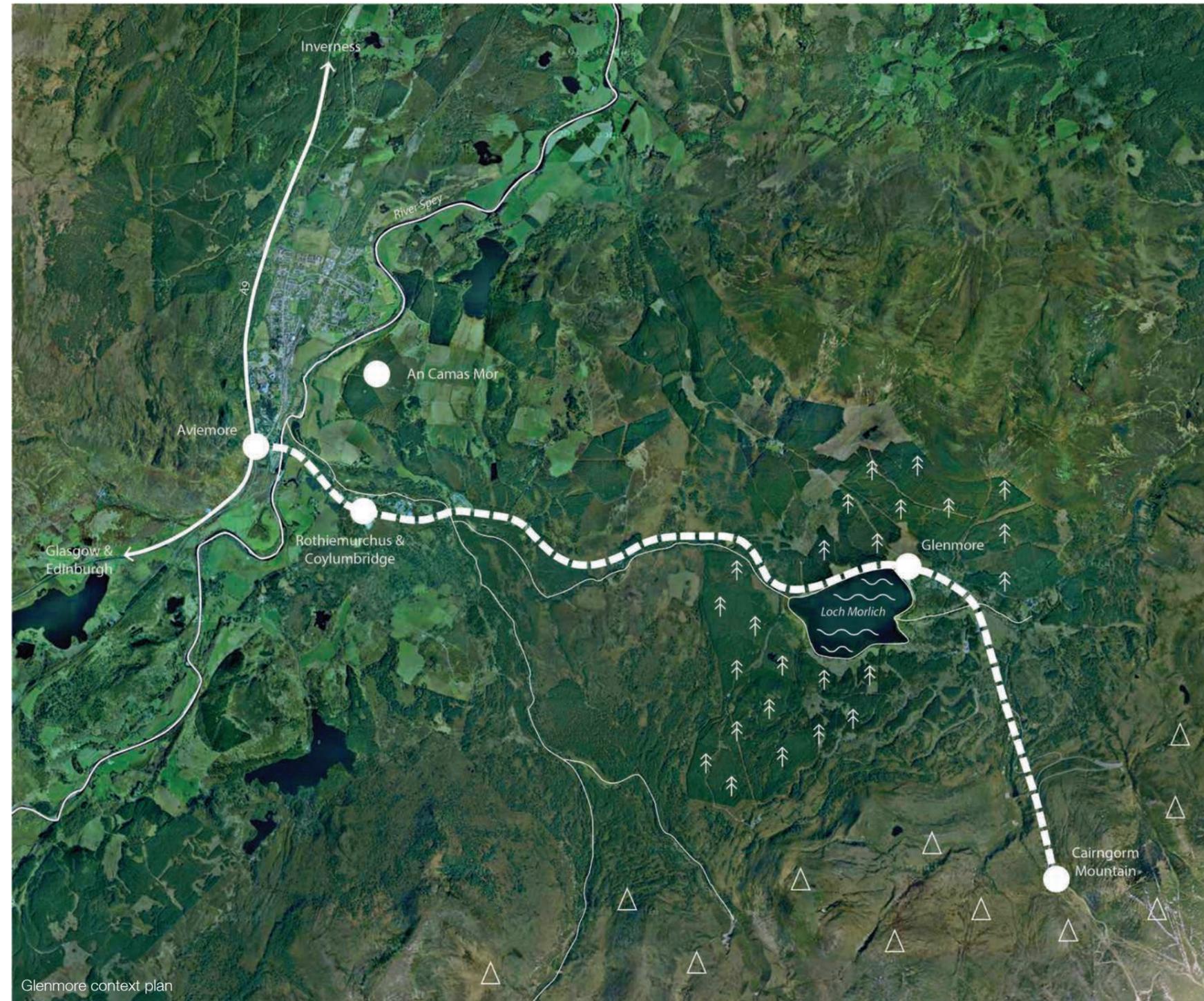
02 The opportunity

The opportunity: Aviemore to Cairngorm

Glenmore Forest Park is a place where mountains, forest and loch meet. Next to Loch Morlich, surrounded by ancient Caledonian pine forest and overlooked by the northern corries of the Cairngorms, Glenmore is a stepping off point to an exceptional environment for outdoor recreation and learning – “the edge of wildness”.

Just minutes after arriving from Aviemore and Strathspey, you could be immersed in the forest, sitting on the beach, sailing or canoeing on the loch, downhill or cross country skiing or heading off into the remote interior of the mountains...or simply taking in the dramatic views and outstanding natural environment. The plan opposite highlights the opportunities for visitor experiences between Aviemore and Cairngorm:

- **Aviemore:** well connected, an established settlement that is a focus for commercial and retail development – economic hub for business, transport, residential and visitor accommodation and infrastructure
- **An Camas Mor:** new residential village with permission for up to 1500 houses
- **Rothiemurchus and Coylumbridge:** village character set in woodland with well established visitor facilities – low altitude visitor activities, formal visitor attractions and accommodation
- **Glenmore:** small settlement dominated by the surrounding forest and mountains landscape with ‘edge of wildness’ character – stepping off point for mountains, loch and forest, focus for informal outdoor recreation. In addition there are two “satellite” developments in the forest, Glenmore Lodge – the national outdoor training centre (Sport Scotland) and Badaguish (Speyside Trust and THC).
- **Cairngorm Mountain:** high level visitor hub - snowsports, mountaineering and hill walking.



02 The opportunity

Creating a world class experience

Cairngorm, Glenmore and Rothiemurchus together attract an estimated 1.4 million visits per year, making it one of Scotland's most visited destinations. Over 40% of visits to the Cairngorms National Park are to this area – to many people, this is their experience of the National Park.

This is a unique opportunity in Scotland. Glenmore is the starting point for access into an internationally important area for nature conservation and a visitor experience in Scotland's most extensive native woodlands and montane plateau. The opportunity is to enhance this special place for people and nature by guiding its future management in a long-term, planned way.

For residents and visitors alike, the opportunity is to enhance the visitor experience to match the quality of environment; to ensure people leave feeling they have not only been to an amazing place, but had an experience to rival any of the world's best National Parks.

Glenmore currently offers a wealth of visitor and learning experiences across the seasons, provided by a range of successful private businesses and public facilities. It is a place highly valued by residents and visitors for its character and sense of place. However its facilities are dated and the results of previous ad hoc decisions are apparent in the fragmented visitor experience. Glenmore also needs to look 20 years ahead and be ready to embrace, adapt to and manage future changes in context, from changing visitor expectations, quicker access from central Scotland by a dualled A9, to changing habitat and species trends.

Through a planned approach to reshaping and investing in the visitor infrastructure and experience, we have the opportunity at Glenmore Forest Park to deliver:

- A world class National Park visitor experience
- Outstanding outdoor learning and education experiences
- A dynamic asset at the heart of the local economy
- A high quality environment of international conservation value.



[Footnote 1.] Sources: Association of Leading Visitor Attractions and Visit Scotland Tourism in Scotland's Regions 2012

03 Outputs

Setting outputs at this stage:

The masterplan aims to deliver the following outputs over the next two decades, which reflect the broader strategic aspirations of CNPA and FCS (see appendix):

Outputs: the visitor experience

- 1. Destination:** Glenmore will be a main orientation and information point for visitors to Cairngorms National Park from Scotland and internationally.
- 2. Visitor hub:** A new visitor hub will have been developed as a focus for orientation and outdoor environmental learning. From there, visitors will be encouraged to do things in Glenmore, to visit other places between Aviemore and Cairngorm Mountain, and to explore the wider National Park.
- 3. Quality:** The quality of the visitor experience in Glenmore must match the unique quality of the environment. People must leave thinking that they been to a place that is amazing in every way.
- 4. Orientation:** Orientation and navigation on foot and by bicycle around the settlement, the loch, the forest and to the mountains will be straightforward.
- 5. Accessibility:** It will be easier to get to Glenmore from Aviemore and beyond without a car.
- 6. Parking:** The network of car parks and their different roles and functions should be simple and clear.
- 7. Accommodation:** Glenmore will be managed primarily as a destination for day visitors and families. Retain current levels of overnight accommodation including camping and caravanning and specialist outdoor activity providers (Glenmore Lodge National Outdoor Training Centre and Scottish Youth Hostel Association).

In partnership with Scottish Youth Hostel Association improve quality, flexibility and integration of hostel accommodation at Glenmore. The masterplan acknowledges the existing planning permission for 38 cabins which could be 'built out', but guides future development in terms of camping and caravanning.

- 8. Watersports:** A refreshed and updated watersports centre with adjacent public toilet provision for visitors to the beach to be developed in partnership between the private business and FCS. The beach and loch are the biggest draw for visitors.

Outputs: the character of Glenmore

- 1. Environment:** The special landscape and wildlife of Glenmore will have been protected and enhanced through sensitive land management and design. There will have been no additional risks to sensitive species such as capercaillie.
- 2. Trailhead:** Glenmore will be 'the edge of wildness': a trailhead and the setting off point to explore the natural environment and the mountains.
- 3. Quality:** Everything in Glenmore should be of top quality. The settlement should be unified by good design but not urban in character. Businesses, whether permanent or mobile, should offer top quality service. New buildings and structures should be of appropriate design and materials "of the Cairngorms". Open up views and connections between visitor facilities, and to the loch and mountains, while still retaining woodland character
- 4. Arrival:** Visitors will have a clearer sense of arrival at both Loch Morlich and at the settlement of Glenmore.
- 5. Vehicle management:** There should be less roadside parking and less visual intrusion from parking. The aim should be not to increase the overall number of spaces, but to use existing parking more efficiently.
- 6. Destination:** Glenmore should remain essentially a visitor destination / recreation hub rather than aspire to become a more conventional community. The aim should be to consolidate the physical extent of the settlement.

03 Outputs

Following direct links to national and local outcomes

By making the most of some of the best landscapes and experiences that Scotland has to offer, delivering these outputs at Glenmore would contribute significantly to better outcomes at national, regional and local scales.

At the national scale, the masterplan’s focus on visitors, recreation, learning, conservation and quality is designed to support the Scottish Government’s overarching purpose of increasing sustainable economic growth. The masterplan directly contributes to seven of the Scottish Government’s National Outcomes (see table below).

Regionally and locally, the masterplan contributes to all of the long term outcomes of the Cairngorms National Park Authority and Forestry Commission Scotland.

By enhancing Glenmore’s contribution as a driver for sustainable economic growth of the local economy and a hub for the wider Cairngorms National Park, delivery of the masterplan will also contribute positively to other organisations’ strategies and plans.

At the heart of the National Park, the masterplan for Glenmore Forest Park will make a significant contribution to national outcomes:

| We will directly contribute to National outcomes: | | By: |
|--|---|---|
| 2 | We realise our full economic potential with more and better employment opportunities for our people. | - helping to secure the role of Cairngorm and Glenmore as a key economic driver for the regional economy |
| 4 | Our young people are successful learners, confident individuals, effective contributors and responsible citizens. | - delivering outstanding outdoor learning experiences |
| 6 | We live longer, healthier lives. | - making it easy for people of all abilities to enjoy and be active in one of Scotland’s most exciting environments |
| 12 | We value and enjoy our built and natural environment and protect it and enhance it for future generations. | - taking a long term planned approach to investing in and enhancing the built and natural environment of Glenmore |
| 13 | We take pride in a strong, fair and inclusive national identity. | - creating a world class place for all of Scotland’s people to enjoy and be proud of |
| 14 | We reduce the local and global environmental impact of our consumption and production. | - improving public and active transport options and reducing reliance on car travel |
| 16 | Our public services are high quality, continually improving, efficient and responsive to local people’s needs. | - delivering collaboration between public bodies, community and businesses to make the most of this asset at the heart of the National Park |

04 Masterplan

The masterplan

The strategic masterplan describes our vision for Glenmore in 20 years time. To make the most of the opportunity and deliver the outputs described in the previous sections, by 2020 we will have created:

- A much improved sense of arrival for visitors, however they arrive. Visitors will feel as if they have arrived somewhere special both when they first arrive at Loch Morlich and in the settlement of Glenmore. It will be easy for visitors to see the range of facilities and activities on offer and how to get them.
- A new hub to welcome visitors to Glenmore, the wider area and the National Park. It will include visitor facilities, café, flexible learning spaces and youth hostel reception and facilities. The hub will be located on the site of the current Youth Hostel.
- A more distinctive identity and character for the settlement of Glenmore as a focus for outdoor activity and learning, establishing its role as a stepping off point for exploring the mountains, forest and loch.

Components for more detailed work

Six components for Glenmore have been identified to take the masterplan to the next level of detail. These are:

- Arrival - Define a clear sense of entering a settlement, reinforced by establishing a pedestrian orientated character and unified, high quality built structures that reflect the 'edge of wildness' character.
- Visitor hub – Create a new visitor hub that provides orientation for all activities and the base for simple facilities. In addition a refreshed and updated watersports centre at the beach with adjacent public toilet facilities and facilities to provide "forward bases" for outdoor activity providers.
- Paths – Establish a legible network of routes that are easy to find, attractive and laid out to maximise the experience and of the dramatic environment
- Parking – Rationalise the relationship between parking, access routes and activities within the settlement and across the Forest Park
- Views and setting – Make the most of key views and create an attractive immediate setting for the settlement
- Visitor accommodation – define an accommodation strategy that consolidates and complements the emphasis on 'outdoor' experience.



Glenmore: Masterplan strategy diagram

04 Masterplan

Long term aspiration: more sustainable access

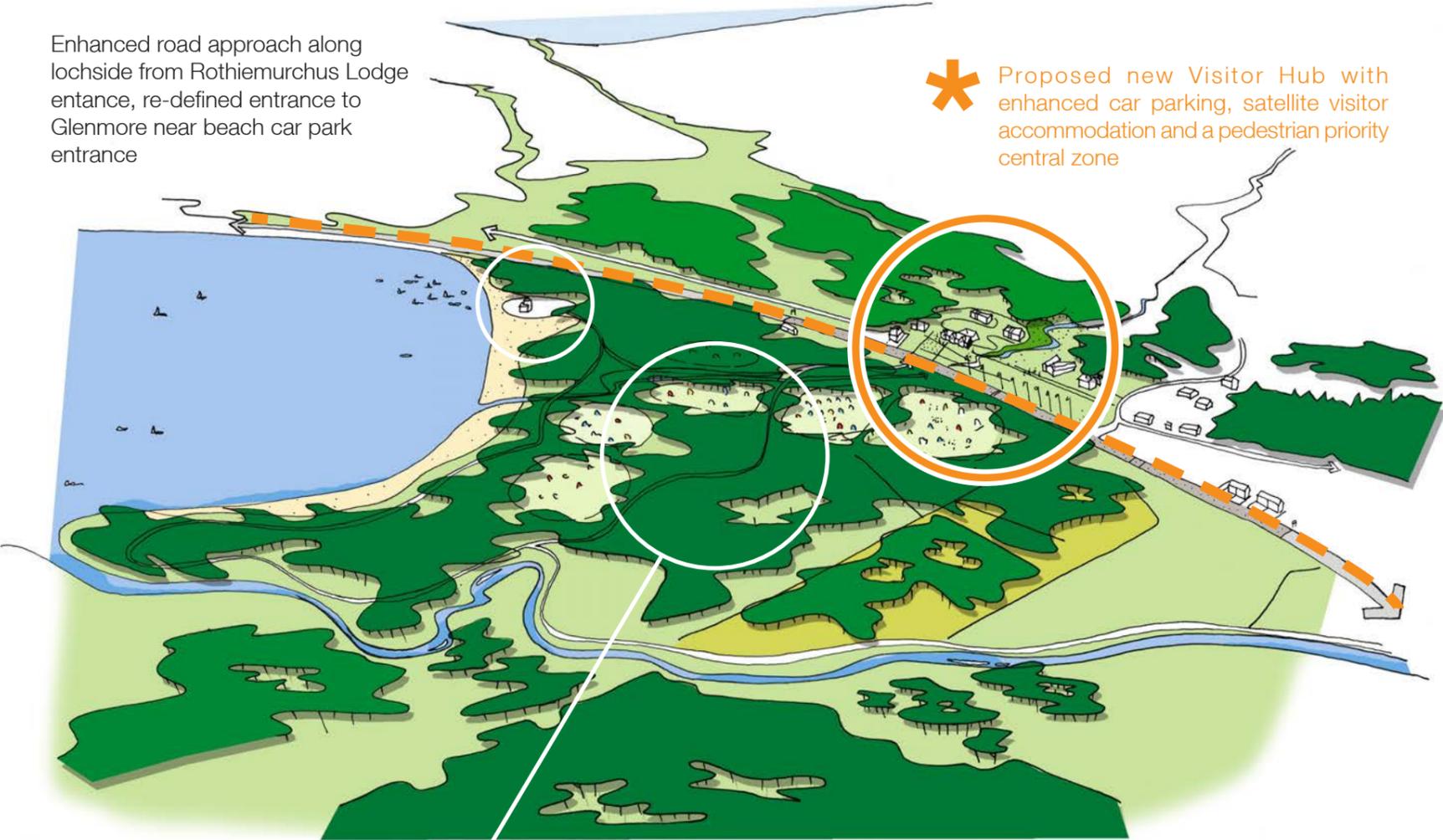
The masterplan is underpinned by a long term aspiration to make it easier to travel to and through Glenmore without a car. The purposes are to enhance Glenmore's special character and demonstrate commitment to environmental sustainability and inclusion in one of Scotland's most high profile outdoor visitor locations.

In the long term, our aspiration is a gradual reduction in the amount of car parking capacity in Glenmore accompanied by an increase in public transport and maintenance of a through road to Caingorm Mountain.

Achieving this would involve significant investment in state-of-the-art 'green' transport options to link Aviemore and Cairngorm Mountain via Coylumbridge and Glenmore. Whatever options are implemented must not harm commercial activity or public access. Rather, our aspiration is to improve on the current situation.

We recognise that this aspiration may not be met during the 20 year period of the masterplan but believe that it is important as a long term guiding principle.

Delivering the entire masterplan is likely to take over a decade – but action needs to start now if we are to succeed.



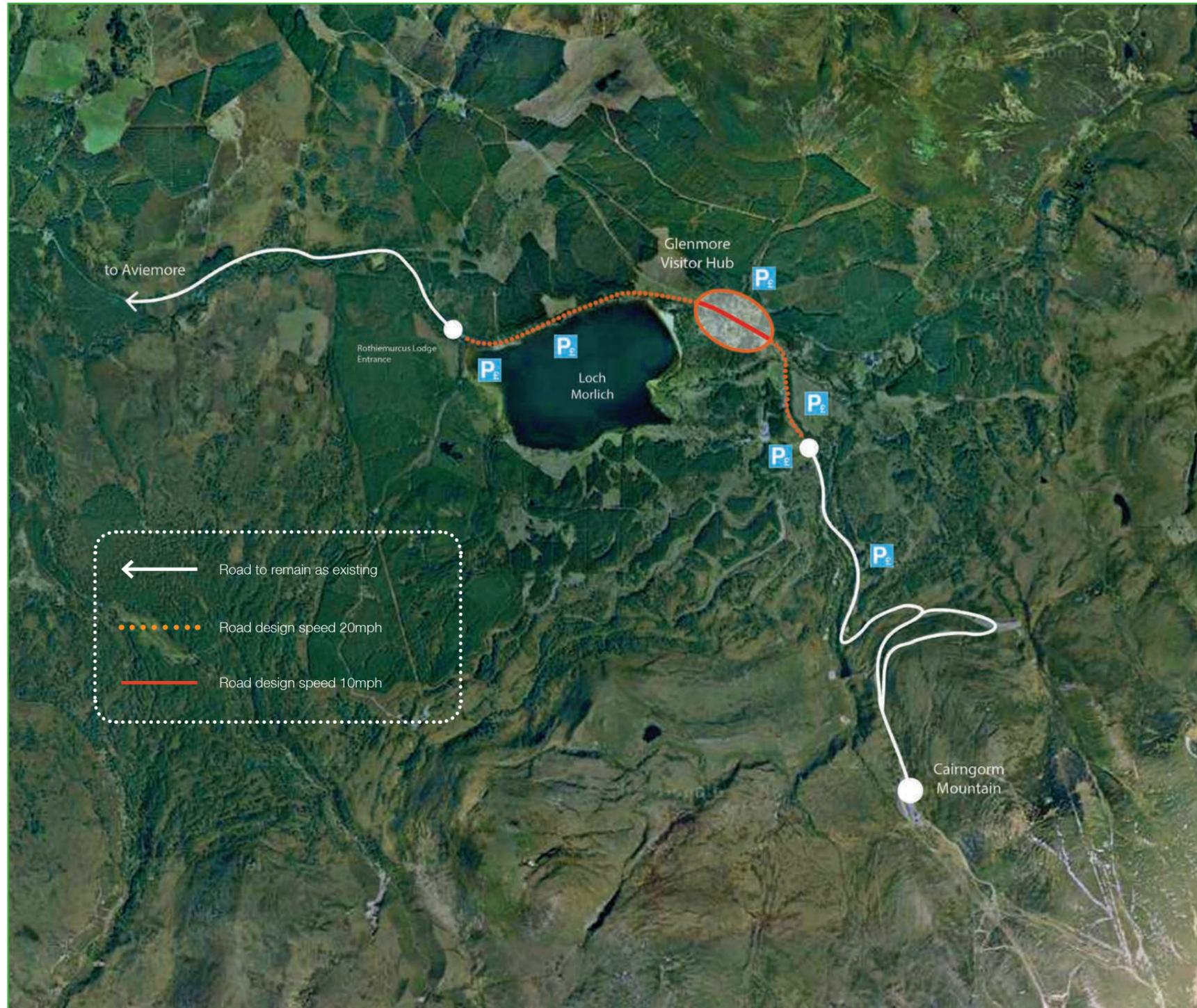
Enhanced road approach along lochside from Rothiemurchus Lodge entrance, re-defined entrance to Glenmore near beach car park entrance

* Proposed new Visitor Hub with enhanced car parking, satellite visitor accommodation and a pedestrian priority central zone

Existing campsite restructured to provide increased pedestrian access

Glenmore: Aerial Context Sketch

05 Masterplan Components - Arrival



Objectives:

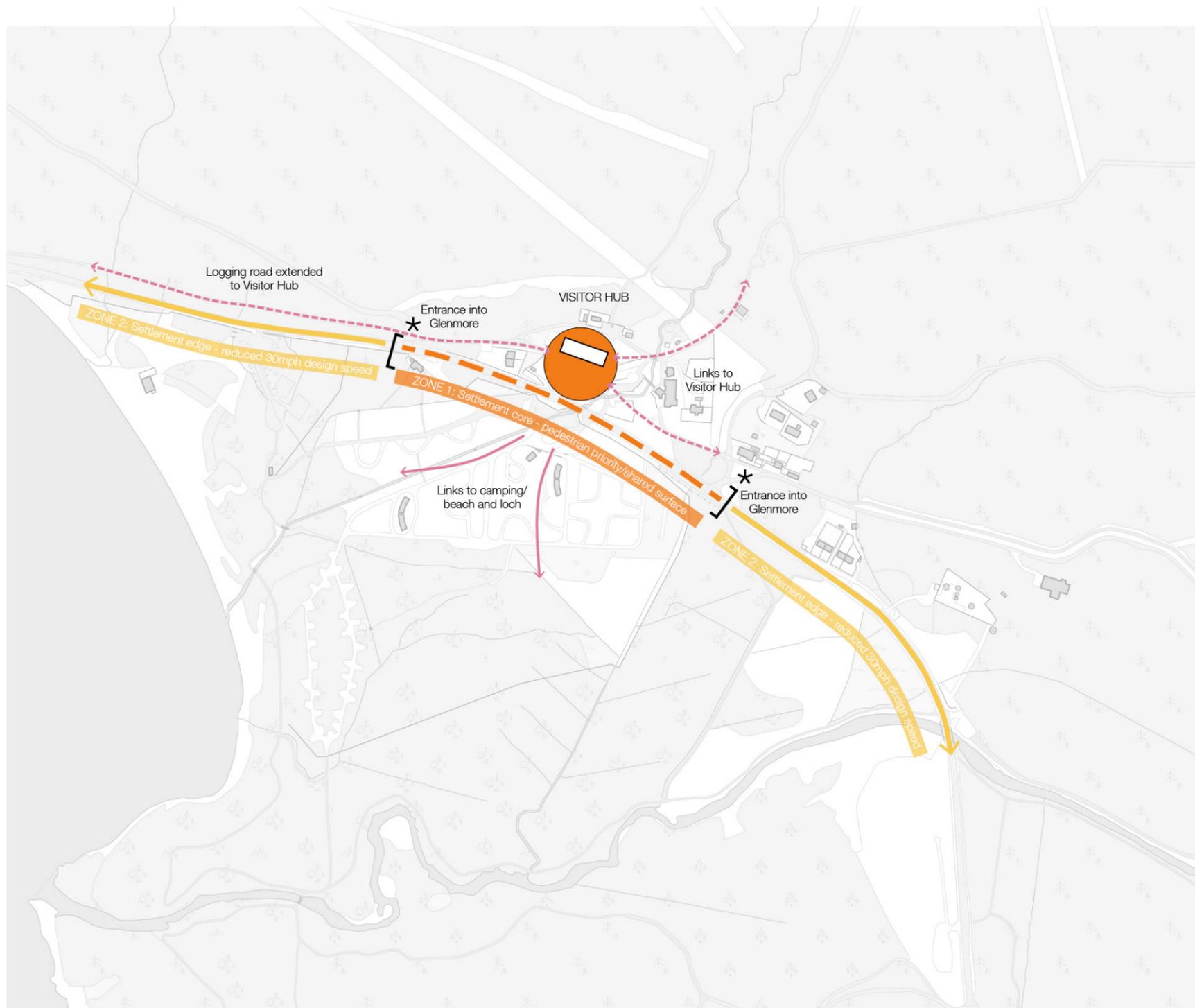
Reinforce the sense of arrival both at Loch Morlich and at the settlement of Glenmore so that:

- Visitors arriving by car, bus and bicycle know that they have arrived and can quickly find a place to stop and orientate themselves.
- The settlement has a strongly pedestrian character
- The visitor hub in the settlement is easy to locate
- Car and bike parking options are obvious
- Drivers passing through Glenmore respect that they are passing through a settlement and behave accordingly.

Key components:

1. Create new arrival points and change the character of the road through Glenmore at the locations shown on the accompanying plans to slow traffic down.
2. Develop proposals for different design speeds and surface treatments on different sections of road through Glenmore. In the settlement, the road and footway surfacing, accesses and signage should be redesigned for pedestrian priority. In the arrival zones along the lochside and past the Hayfield car park, the road surface should be suitably treated for a lower design speed.
3. Extend the Logging Way for visitors arriving and leaving by bike.
4. Fully integrate bus stops within the new pedestrian priority zone and settlement core of Glenmore.

05 Masterplan Components - Arrival



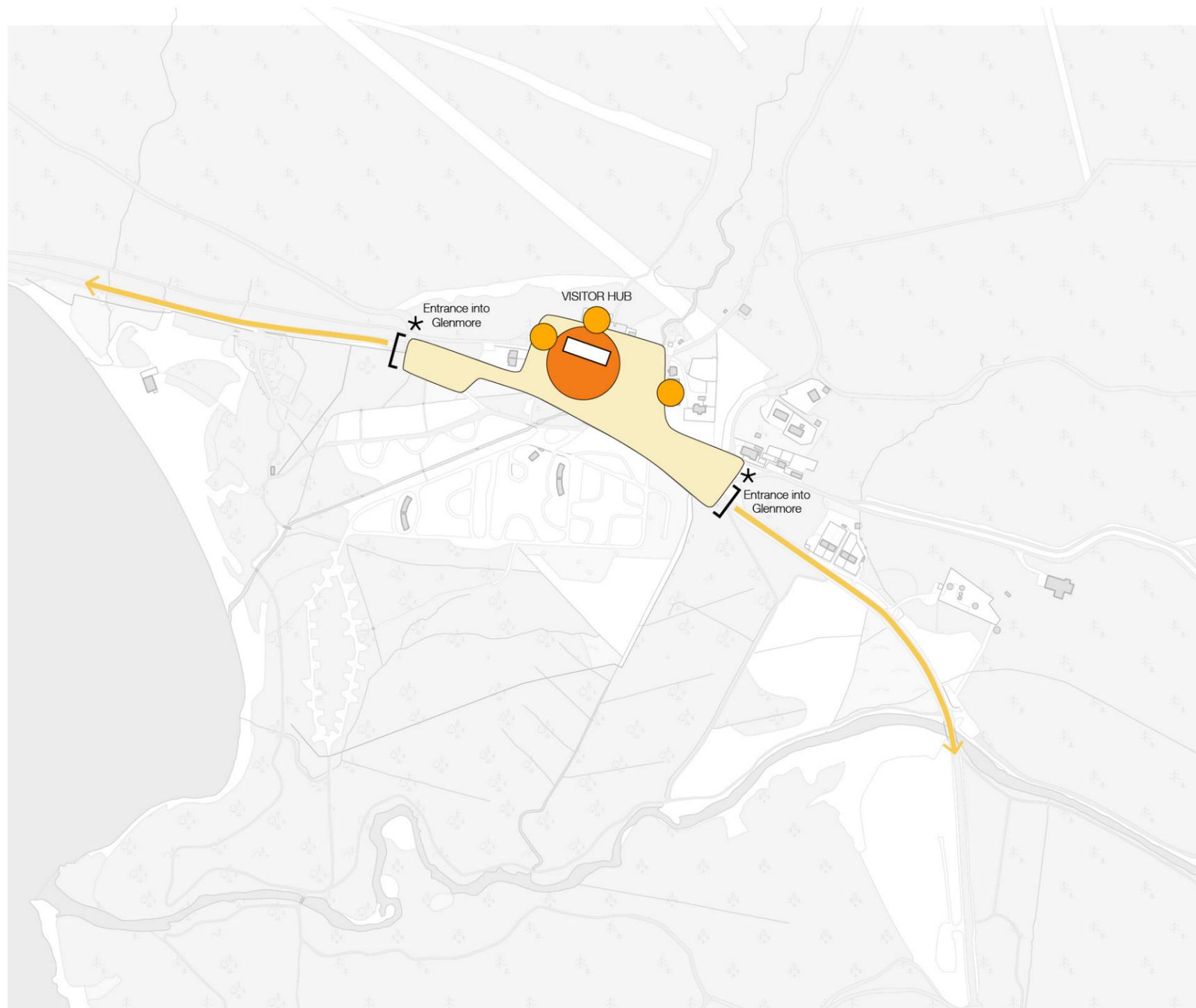
Further work required:

- Traffic management strategy,
- Detailed design, costing of component projects,
- Third party agreements

Outline budget:

£ 2 million

05 Masterplan Components - Visitor Hub



Objectives:

Create new visitor hub as focus for visitor orientation and learning to replace existing Youth Hostel and Visitor Centre facilities, incorporating information about Glenmore Forest Park, Rothiemurchus, Cairngorm Mountain and the wider National Park. Must be high quality design which is appropriate for flagship visitor hub in such a sensitive location.

Key components

1. Make the most of the land available when combining the SYHA site and the existing VC site and carparks to create an integrated and efficient visitor hub
2. Replace and develop SYHA building and site into a visitor orientation/learning hub, cafe and SYHA reception – build on its prominent location and fine views
3. Provide satellite accommodation for the youth hostel, respecting existing listed buildings
4. Explore car parking options relative to landform and access, including provision for short term, coach parking and overnight parking for the SYHA.
5. Provide facilities to act as “forward bases” for outdoor activity providers.

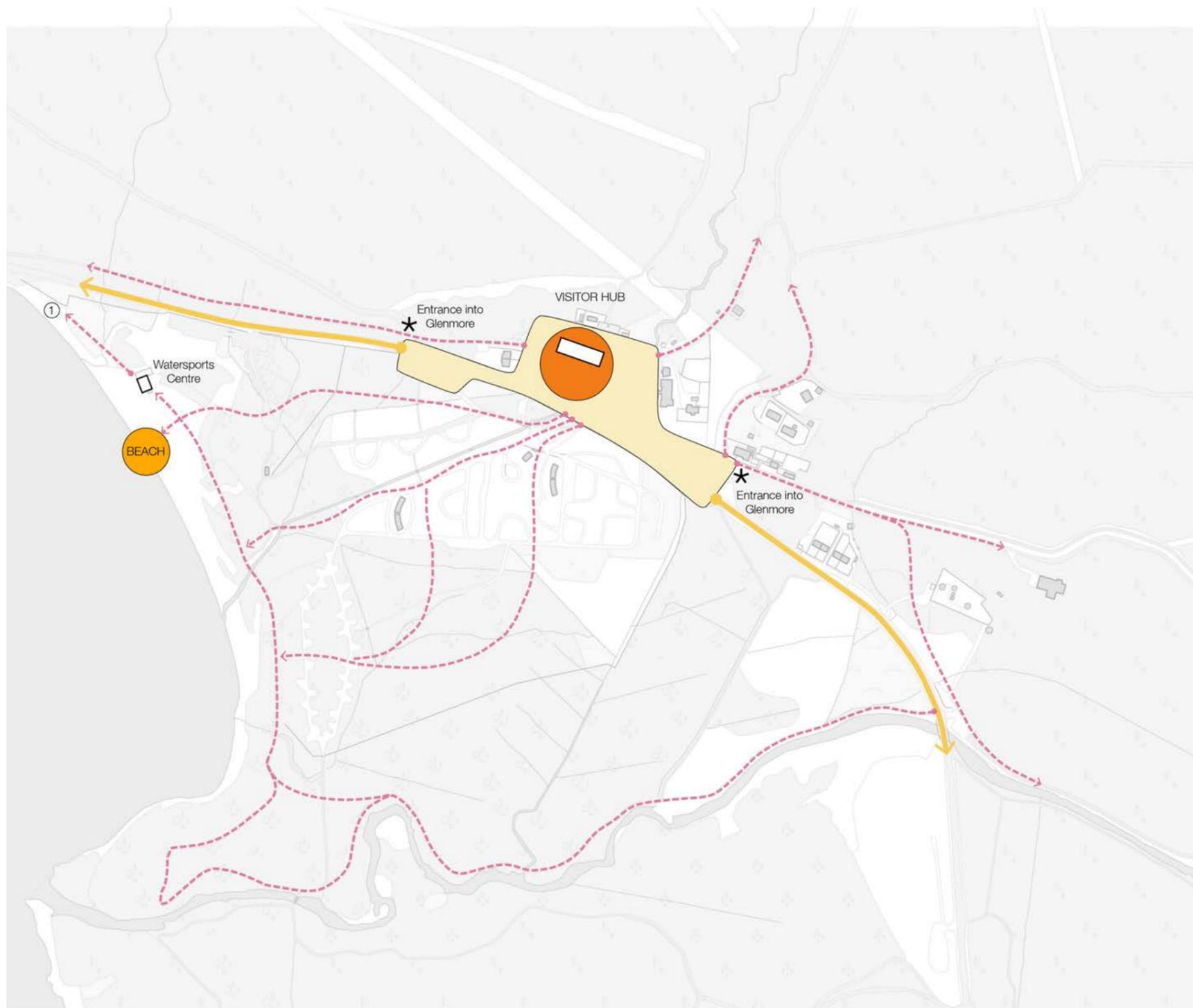
Further work required

- Prepare joint brief for new visitor hub
- Condition survey of existing buildings, topographical survey of site
- Outline design and costings to comply with planning policy and guidance

Outline budget: £4-5 million



05 Masterplan Components - Paths + Routes



Objectives:

Improve access from Glenmore visitor hub and all car parks to the path network. Improve pedestrian/cycle access between existing facilities within the settlement and increase proportion built to Countryside for All standard.

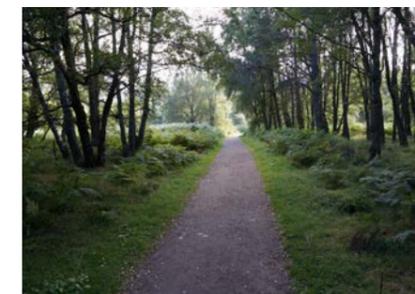
Key Components:

1. Improve connections between facilities within the settlement – i.e. visitor hub, bus stops, car parks, shop/café, campsite, youth hostel, Glenmore Lodge, Reindeer Centre, beach, watersports centre.
2. Improve wider connections, for example through the campsite from the settlement and the Hayfield car park to the beach, to and along The Logging Way and from the Allt Ban car park to Green Lochan/Ryvoan Pass.
3. Complete round-the-loch path by building a new loch shore path along the north shore of Loch Morlich from the beach to Rothiemurchus Lodge bridge.
4. Use the hub as the main orientation point for information about other walking and cycling routes from trailheads around Glenmore.
5. Develop plans to manage visitor zones across the Forest Park including the setting of all paths, opening up views, thinning trees and establishing new trees to improve the visitor experience.

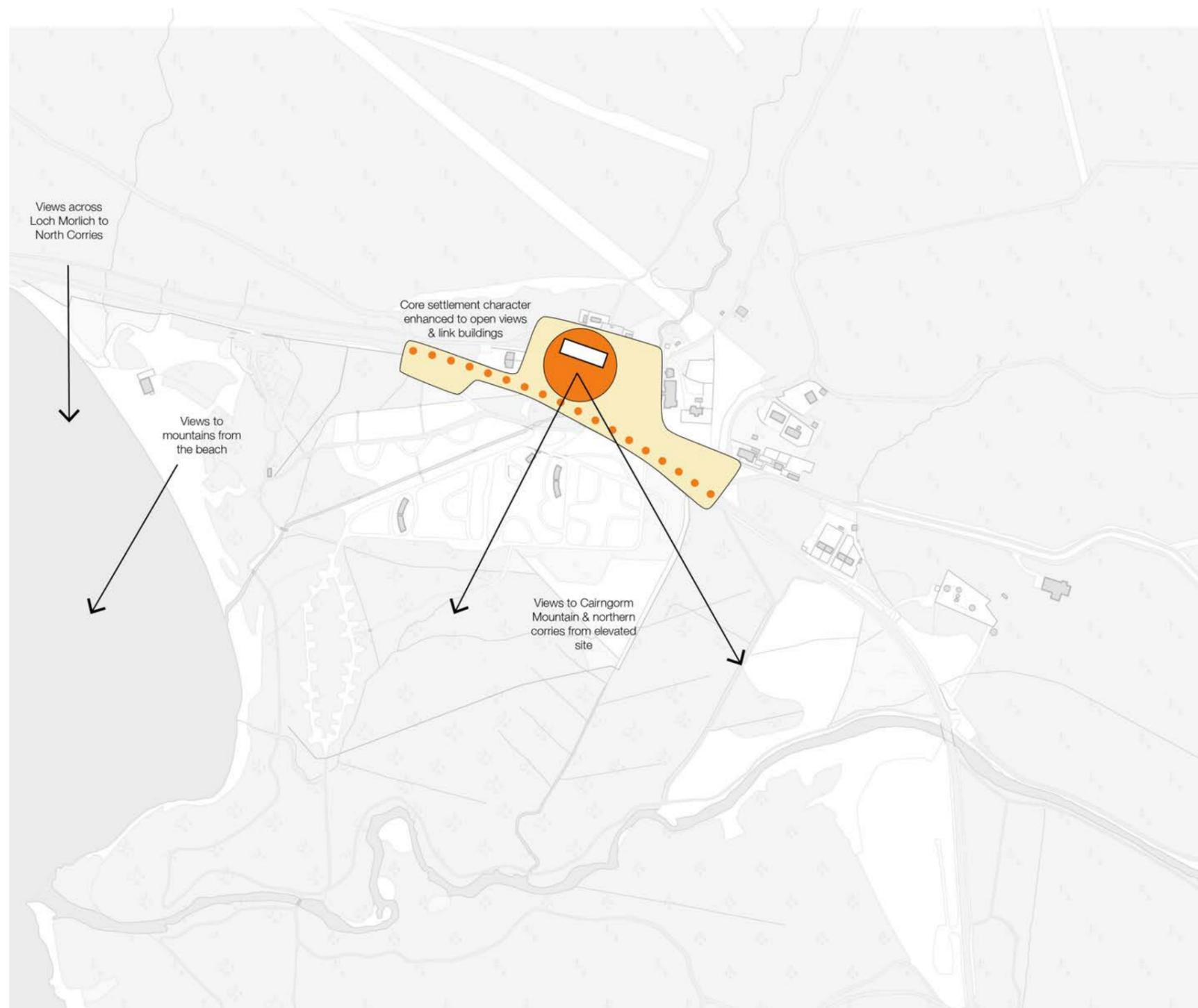
Further work required:

- Identify new routes and connections required, in association with parking developments (see Component 4)
- Develop “visitor zone” landscape plans for all paths
- Detailed design and costings

Outline budget: £0.5 million



05 Masterplan Components - View corridors and setting



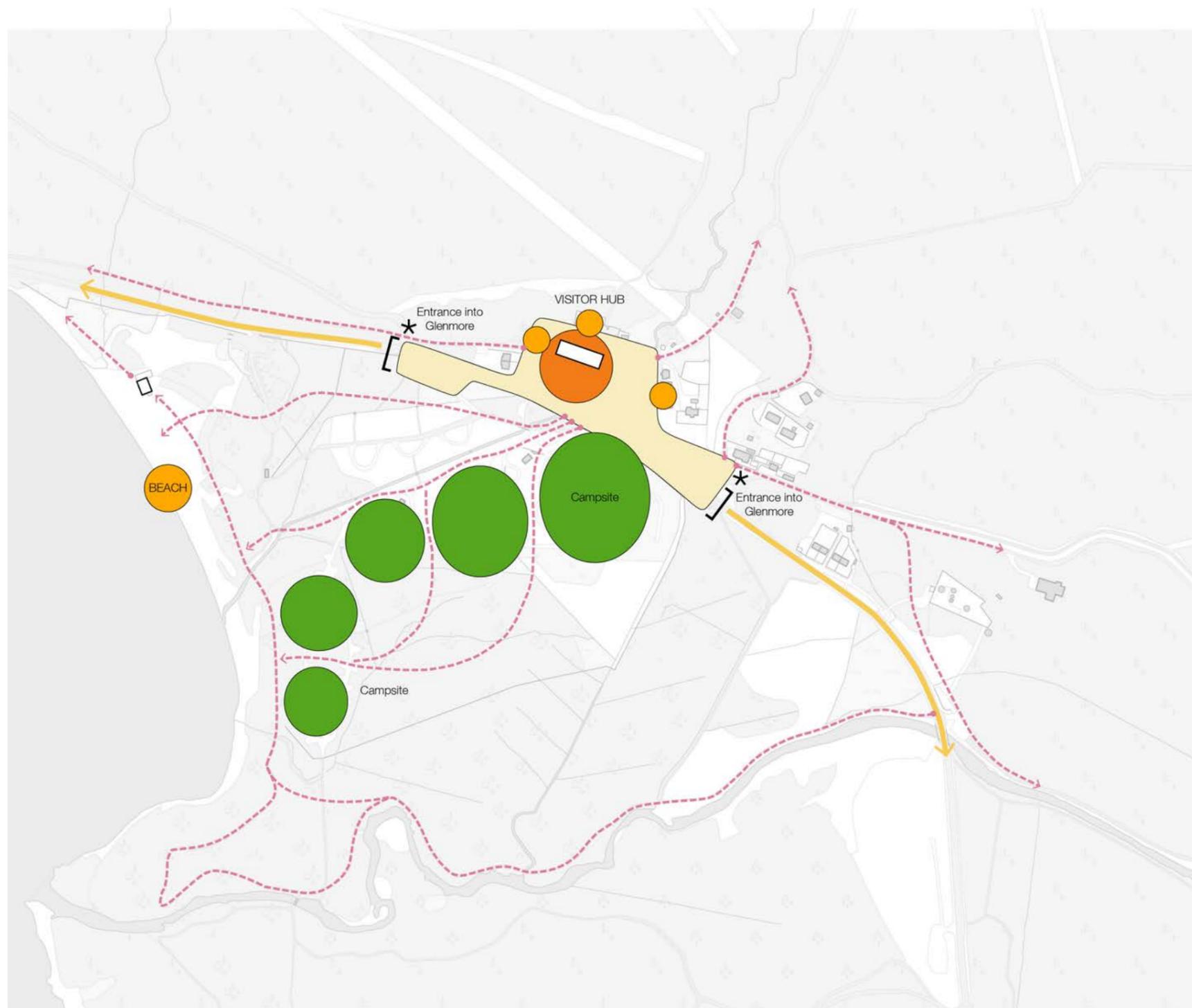
Objectives:

Open up strategic views from key points in Glenmore to the mountains and to visually connect facilities within the settlement. Improve and unify the setting and character of the settlement.

Key Components:

1. Identify key strategic panoramas – from new visitor hub to the Northern Corries and Loch Morlich.
2. Identify the strategic view corridors within the settlement so that the visitor hub, shop/café, bus stops, Reindeer Centre etc are inter-visible.
3. Opening up the very centre of the settlement to make facilities visible from the road and engender more of a sense of going through a settlement
4. Analyse and articulate the desired visitor experience in different parts of Glenmore (settlement and beyond). Prepare Design Brief (for structures, materials surfaces, planting, furniture etc) and a landscape management and maintenance plan to deliver this quality of visitor experience into the long term

05 Masterplan Components - Accommodation



Objectives:

Retain current levels of overnight accommodation but consolidate the camping and caravanning experience. Maintain existing levels of accommodation for specialist outdoor activity providers. The masterplan acknowledges the existing planning permission for 38 cabins which could be 'built out', but guides future development to favour camping and caravanning provision.

Key Components:

1. Improve public access through campsite to beach from the new visitor hub.
2. Retain overall amount of camping provision but offer greater mix of experiences.

Further work required:

- Detailed design and costings for campsite enhancements in liaison with operators.

Outline budget: £ 0.5-1 million



06 Making it happen



Grizedale Visitor Centre in the Lake District

The next phase of work needs to develop the project in more detail, working up detailed proposals including costings. Ideally these proposals should include some quick wins to demonstrate a commitment to action.

The various steps in the next phase of work are outlined below. The aim should be to complete this phase by spring 2015.

Engage with partners (summer 2014 to summer 2015)

1. Review the masterplan with local partners: neighbours, businesses, local community and public agencies.

Strategic action plan (Summer 2014)

2. Prepare strategic action plan that specifies all projects and identifies what will happen when and by whom. This should be prepared with partners. The plan should include high level costings in order to enable budgeting and initial discussions with potential funders to begin.

Quick wins (summer 2014 to summer 2015)

3. Subject to availability of funding and consents, some of the work contained in phase 1 could begin soon. For example:

- Manage unauthorised roadside parking along north loch shore (component 4)
- Visitor zone work (component 4)

Although some of these projects may take a few months to design and implement, early action would demonstrate intent and generate momentum.

Develop funding strategy (autumn 2014 to spring 2015)

4. Develop funding strategy, initially exploring feasibility of different funding options/packages and establishing what additional information is likely to be required to meet funders requirements.

This will need to be informed by outline costings (see next step).

Design and cost component projects (summer 2014 to spring 2015)

5. Further work will be required to develop comprehensive briefs, and design and cost the projects that make up the masterplan. The briefs contained in the appendices should be the starting point.

Prepare implementation strategy (spring/summer 2015)

6. As the masterplan firms up, more detailed work will need to be carried out on monitoring, evaluation, economic justification, risk assessment and so on. This additional work should take the context and direction of this masterplan as its starting point. For example, monitoring and evaluation of the masterplan should be based on the outputs and outcomes described in this document.

There are a number of critical guiding principles which should inform the masterplan as it moves forward:

- **The masterplan proposals should be financially viable and sustainable for the organisations concerned**
- **Key local stakeholders should be supportive of the masterplan, engaged in its preparation and implementation, and committed to its implementation where appropriate**
- **The masterplan needs to be sufficiently sustainable and flexible to be resilient over the next 20 years**

Implementation of the full masterplan will take a number of years. Quick wins and earlier phases should be designed and implemented in such a way that they do not prejudice any of the longer term proposals, such as the visitor hub.

Appendix i: Related documents

Related documents

- Cairngorms National Park Authority Corporate Plan 2012-2015
- Cairngorms National Park Local Plan (2010)
- Cairngorms National Park Partnership Plan 2012-2017
- Cairngorms National Park Proposed Local Development Plan (2013)
- Cairngorms National Park Outdoor Access Strategy 2007-2012
- Cairngorms National Park Strategy and Action Plan for Sustainable Tourism 2011-2016
- Cairngorms National Park Sustainable Design Guide (2010)
- Forestry Commission Scotland Strategic Plan 2013-2016
- Glenmore car parking existing capacity appraisal (2013)
- Glenmore – Development Options Appraisal (2012)
- Glenmore Forest Park Visitor Experience and Interpretation Plan (2012)
- Glenmore Forest Park visitor survey report (2010)
- Inverness, Ross and Skye Forest District Strategic Plan 2009-2013
- Scottish Forestry Strategy (2006)
- Scottish Forestry Strategy: Implementation Plan 2013-2016

Appendix ii: Options Appraisal