



## For information

**Title:** Strategic Tourism Infrastructure Development Plan  
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### Purpose

The [Strategic Tourism Infrastructure Development Plan](#) is one of a series of plans that sit alongside the National Park Partnership Plan (NPPP). Along with the Sustainable Tourism and Active Cairngorms Action Plans, these plans collectively describe the Park Authority and partners' work in relation to tourism, visitor facilities and services and the management of visitor impacts on the Park. This report gives Board members oversight of progress towards the plan's objectives and is being presented to the Board now 2026 as roughly the mid-point for the current plan and as current progress towards these objectives has implications for the content of the next NPPP.

### Recommendations

The Board is asked to:

- a) Note the progress towards delivery of the objectives contained within the Strategic Tourism Infrastructure Development Plan.

### Strategic context

1. The Strategic Tourism Infrastructure Development Plan describes in more detail specific activities that were proposed to be undertaken by the Park Authority or partners to support the delivery of National Park Partnership Plan (NPPP) objectives. In particular this plan describes key activities that would assist in achieving the following NPPP objectives:
  - a) People
    - i. B5. Community assets and land B10. A Park for All
    - ii. B11. Volunteering and outdoor learning
  - b) Place



- i. C5. Visitors to the National Park
  - ii. C8. Accessible path and cycle network
  - iii. C9. High-quality visitor experience
2. In 2018 the Scottish Government (SG) established the Rural Tourism Infrastructure Fund (RTIF) with the aims of improving the visitor experience in rural parts of Scotland that were experiencing visitor management issues as a result of additional visitors and addressing related pressures on local infrastructure and negative impacts on communities. Following the first two rounds of funding VisitScotland, who managed the fund introduced a requirement that for any projects to be supported in future they would require to be identified in a Strategic Tourism Infrastructure Development Plan for the area. To support this VisitScotland provided funding to Local Authorities and National Park Authorities to produce such a plan for their area. The Cairngorms Strategic Tourism Infrastructure Development Plan was produced in 2023 in part to meet that requirement.

### **Strategic risk management**

3. The activity described in this report partially assists in mitigating strategic risk no. 11 - "Unrealistic expectations of what the Park Authority and its partners can achieve ..." as it has helped guide how visitor infrastructure funding is directed and has enabled access to external funding through the Rural Tourism Infrastructure Fund. However, the inclusion of some projects in the plan that have not proceeded, even where the delivery partner would have been a partner organisation, could introduce some reputational risk.

### **Implications**

4. There are no strategic resource implications arising directly from this report as it largely describes past activity. However, the delivery of projects that are not yet completed does have resource implications. In some cases, this will involve use of Park Authority resources either for direct delivery of a project or as grant aid to a partner organisation or business and these allocations are considered as part of the annual budget setting process.



## Success measures

5. In broad terms success in terms of delivery of the plan's objective can be measured through the completion of the projects included in the plan. It should however be noted that some proposals included in the plan were more aspirational rather than firm projects but were included as their inclusion could open up the opportunity of accessing Rural Tourism Infrastructure Fund support were they to go ahead. Such projects may not therefore proceed

## Delivery of projects

6. Progress in delivering projects to date has been mixed with some complete and others progressing well but some seeing no significant progress. A small number of projects are no longer anticipated to proceed in the near future (two - five) due to changed circumstances. In broad terms progress across the 33 projects individually defined in the plan can be described as follows:

a) Project completed	5
b) Project underway/ some elements delivered	9
c) Project being delivered through C2030 programme	3
d) No significant progress to date	9
e) Project unlikely to proceed in the near future.	4
7. Further details on the level of progress with each of the 33 projects individually identified in the plan are given in Annex 1.
8. Reasons for the delays to or lack of progress with projects vary but include capacity either within the Park Authority or partner organisations, changed circumstances since the project was identified or lack of funding. Funding pressures have in part been due to the limited financial resources within individual organisations including the Park Authority but also changes to external funding schemes – for example the Rural Tourism Infrastructure Fund was suspended for a year in 2024/25, so no funding was available that year.

## Other Tourism Infrastructure Investment

9. In addition to the 33 projects individually identified, the plan also outlines how the Park Authority will continue to invest in other infrastructure such as paths, the granite entry point markers and the three snow roads installations - "Still", "The



Watchers” and “Connecting Contours”. Minor repairs, safety improvements and landscaping improvements at the entry point markers and snow roads installations are under way and significant investment has gone into a number of path projects in the time since the plan was produced. These include:

- a) Cinder path and Deeside Way Road crossing feasibility study, Ballater
- b) Linn of Quoich path improvements
- c) The Charter Chest path, Braemar
- d) Bachnagairn path, Glen Clova
- e) Laggan Wolftrax blue trail

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## Annex 1

Tourism Infrastructure Plan Proposals and progress					
No.	Location	Project type	Priority	Progress / Comments	*
1	Various	Rail Entry Point Signage	Medium	Completed	*
2	Various	Signage at Main Bus / Coach Entry Points	Medium	No progress to date Some signage expected to be delivered through C2030 projects – initially at new Ballater transport hub	
3	Various	Active Travel Infrastructure	Varies	Public consultation complete and designs under way as part of C2030 programme	*
4	Glenmore	Old Logging Way Active Travel Improvements	High	Route study completed June 2024 which identified improvements required over multiple years. Initial works undertaken with more programmed for 2026. Further active travel facilities funded at Glenmore Visitor Centre through C2030 programme	*
5	Various	Public Transport Infrastructure	High	Ballater Transport hub being delivered by NESTRANS / Aberdeenshire Council. Glenmore corridor bus stop improvements by Highland Council. Some further projects being developed for delivery as part of C2030 programme	
6	Various	Enhancing the EV charge point network	Medium	New charge points funded at Glenmore (Reindeer Centre), Nethy Bridge and Carrbridge (Landmark) via National Parks UK sponsorship funding from BMW. Further work at	*



				Glenmore Visitor Centre in progress with Rural Tourism Infrastructure Fund (RTIF) funding.	
7	Cairngorm Mountain	Cairngorm Mountain parking and active travel improvements	High	Car Park improvements undertaken by Cairngorm Mountain. Study into active travel opportunities completed but no plans for delivery yet developed. Verge parking management introduced by Highland Council.	*
8	Glenmore	Parking management & visitor improvements	High	New car park and roadside parking management system for the Glenmore area introduced by Highland Council / Forestry and Land Scotland. Access improvements to new toilets completed 2024. Temporary parking at Hayfield provided at peak times. Loch Morlich beach car park improvements completed 2026.	*
9	Ryvoan	Toilets and management of visitor pressures	Medium	Royal Society for the Protection of Birds (RSPB) and Mountain Bothies association developing plans for new toilet provision. No progress on other aspects.	
10	Tullochgrue	Parking management	Medium	Initial options considered at on site meeting but no further progress to date.	
11	Loch an Eilean	Active Travel infrastructure and accessibility	High	Path improvements around the loch to improve accessibility undertaken in 2024 and 2026. Improved promotion of active travel options that initially use Old Logging Way being considered through C2030 work in Aviemore.	*
12	Badenoch	Storylands Heritage sites parking	Medium	No progress to date.	
13	Glen Feshie	Parking management	Medium	No progress to date. Current usage levels are largely being catered for so improvements may not be such a high priority.	



14	Uath Lochans	Parking management	Medium	Minor improvements undertaken in spring 2026.	
15	Feshie Bridge	Parking management & trail improvements	Medium	No progress to date.	
16	Kincraig Bridge	Parking and river access	Medium	River access study for this and other locations commissioned and reported in 2025. Discussions with estate, community and other partners followed but wider visitor management concerns have meant progress stalled. Further discussions now arranged for July 2026.	*
17	Aviemore	Parking and transport facilities	High	Initial options considered by Highland Council but no further progress to date. Delays to dualling the adjacent section of the A9 mean this is unlikely to proceed in the foreseeable future.	
18	Loch Pityoulish	Parking and improved access	Medium	Discussions on options held with estate and some alternative parking provided by the estate.	
19	Loch Vaa	Parking and improved access	Medium	Improved car parking and improved access path to the loch produced by Highland Council. Landowner agreement still to be reached before construction can proceed.	
20	Loch Garten	Trail improvements & car park connections	High	Trail improvements completed along with new changing places toilet and parking management improvements (targeted at motorhomes).	*
21	Grantown-on-Spey	Parking management	Medium	No progress to date.	



22	Tomintoul / Glenlivet	Motorhome facilities	Medium	Community Trust developed proposals but as this was for a larger scale campsite this is no longer considered to be small scale publicly available infrastructure as defined in the plan.	
23	Auchnerran	Parking & access improvements	Medium	Landowner has developed plans for improvements and funding has been offered by the Park Authority for 2026/27 delivery.	*
24	Cambus o' May	Parking management & access improvements	High	No progress to date.	
25	Ballater	Coach Parking	Medium	Further work under way on feasibility of a site East of Ballater led by NESTRANS and will complement Aberdeenshire Council led Ballater transport hub which would be used as a passenger drop-off point. Further Park Authority involvement will be as part of C2030 programme.	
26	Balmoral	Parking management & pedestrian access improvements	High	Traffic management undertaken by Aberdeenshire Council. New walking route to Easter Balmoral / Balmoral Cairns path developed after suspension bridge reopened in 2024. Path improvements around Prince Alberts Cairn in 2025.	*
27	Angus Glens	Parking and sense of arrival improvements	Medium	Parking and toilet improvements at Milton of Clova completed by Angus Council in 2025. Overflow car parking added at Glen Doll by Forestry and Land Scotland. Longer term plans for estate being developed by Forestry and Land Scotland following purchase of Glen Prosen.	*
28	Spittal of Glenshee	Motorhome, toilet and active travel facilities	Medium	No progress to date. Now unlikely to proceed due to changed circumstances with private owner.	



29	Blair Atholl	Parking and active travel improvements	Medium	Some path improvements at Bruar and Blair Atholl completed 2025 but no progress with parking or active travel routes. Some community led active travel facilities in Blair Atholl supported through C2030 programme.	*
30	Various	Network of motorhome facilities	Medium	Funding provided for feasibility work and projects in Ballater and Braemar being funded for 2026/27 delivery. Waste disposal unit and public toilet in Grantown funded in 2024. Feasibility funding for a similar project in Carrbridge awarded in 2026.	*
31	Snow Roads	Summit signage	Medium	No progress to date. Project was an Aberdeenshire Council proposal that may now be on hold due to funding.	
32	Glenmore	Meall a' Bhuachaille path	Medium/ High	Path works including testing new innovative approach to cater for bikes funded in 2025. Funding for further work committed in 2026.	*
33	Various	Core path network condition survey	High	Survey completed and now being used to support decisions on path improvement funding. Further audit of upland paths undertaken by Outdoor Access Trust for Scotland during 2025/26.	*