



Forestry and Land Scotland  
Coilltearachd agus Fearann Alba

# Glen Orchy & Glen Lochy

*Help us to help your glens*

## The challenge

Glen Orchy and Glen Lochy have suffered from degradation caused by growing visitor pressure in recent years, especially since COVID 19. There have been growing visitor parking for recreation access and informal overnight stays, which have resulted in a range of adverse impacts :

- road safety issues caused by inappropriate parking
- environmental impact on sensitive landscapes, especially human waste and litter
- setting of fires that have caused localised damage and threaten wider destruction
- Widespread visual and physical damage to the roadside through wear and tear

As a major landowner in the area, Forestry and Land Scotland wants to invest in visitor facilities in Glen Orchy and Glen Lochy, to provide a better experience for visitors through realistic proposals which have community support.

Since speaking with local residents, businesses and the community council earlier in the Summer, the project team have been developing the designs for improvements at several locations in Glen Orchy and Glen Lochy. We would like to share our proposals with you and hear your views.

Once you have seen our proposals, please complete a comments form and post it into the letterbox here, or you can view and comment on the proposals online via this link and QR code :

<https://forms.gle/3jxgo77igx1ajPh28>

Need more information or have a question? Please contact :

Nick Wright 07900 334110

[nick@nickwrightplanning.co.uk](mailto:nick@nickwrightplanning.co.uk)

The deadline for comments is Friday 2nd September

*Your local knowledge and suggestions will help us deliver the best solutions. Please help us to help your glens*



## Project Aims

Our aim for this project is to review the provision of visitor facilities in Glen Orchy, Glen Lochy and Bridge of Orchy, identify gaps in that provision, and to recommend how facilities can be developed or expanded to operate more cohesively, better meet market demand and minimise the impact of visitor pressure in the area. We want to enable a better visitor experience whilst minimising negative impacts on community safety and the environment.

Argyll and Bute Council and Forestry and Land Scotland (FLS) have been successful in a bid for funding from the Rural Tourism Infrastructure Fund to support these proposals. Following this current community engagement, we will be submitting the proposals to the next stage of fund approval, in order to secure budget for delivery of the proposals on the ground. In parallel with this process, we will make application for planning permission. If both of these steps are successful, securing funding and planning approval, it is hoped to start implementation of the works in 2023.

We will continue to keep in close contact with the local community and with other stakeholders and interested parties through this process, and welcome an open dialogue.



West Highland Way campers enjoy Bridge of Orchy  
Outdoor Adventurer



Worn vegetation at the riverside



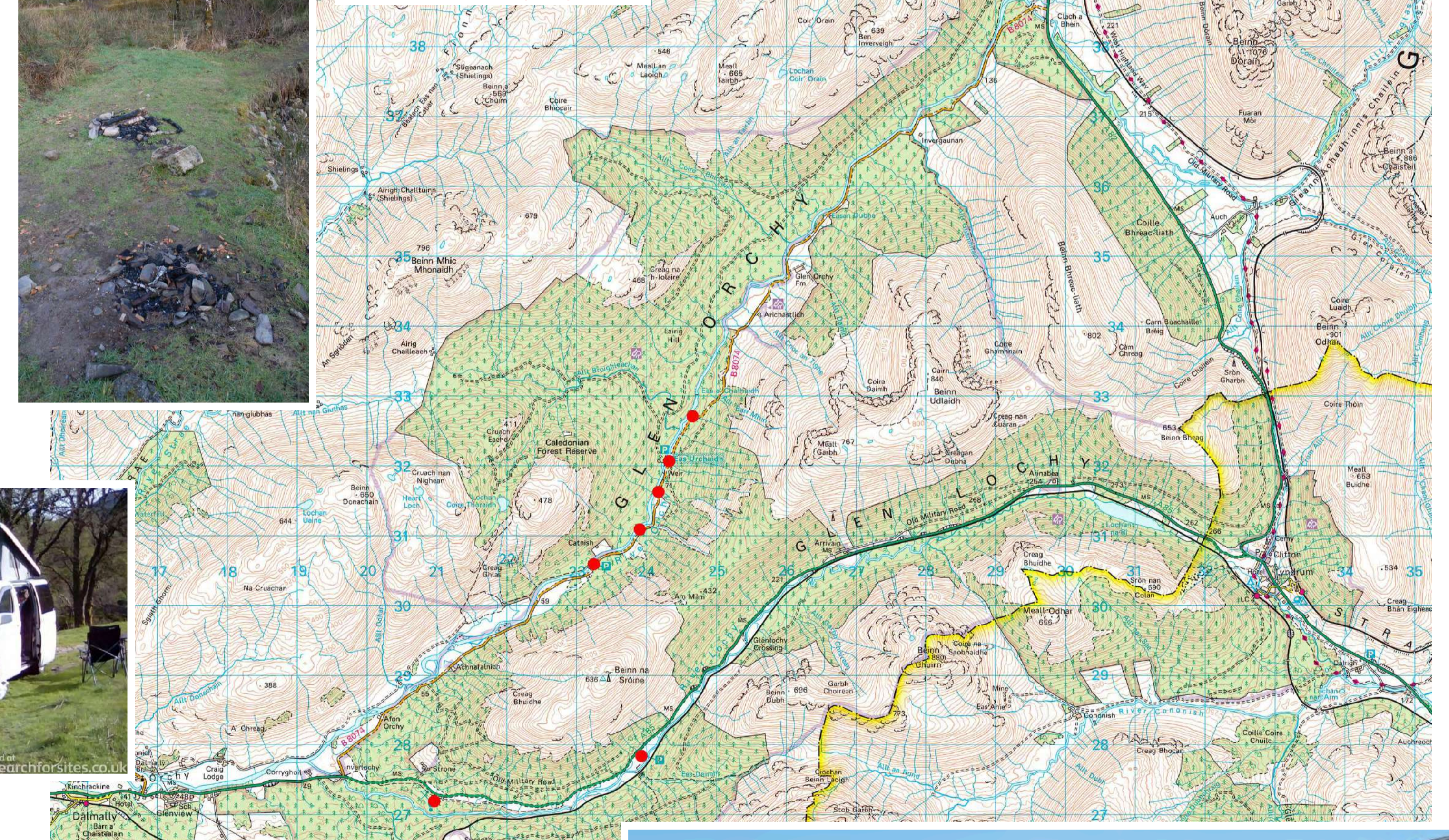
Passing Place parking by campers  
Wikimedia commons



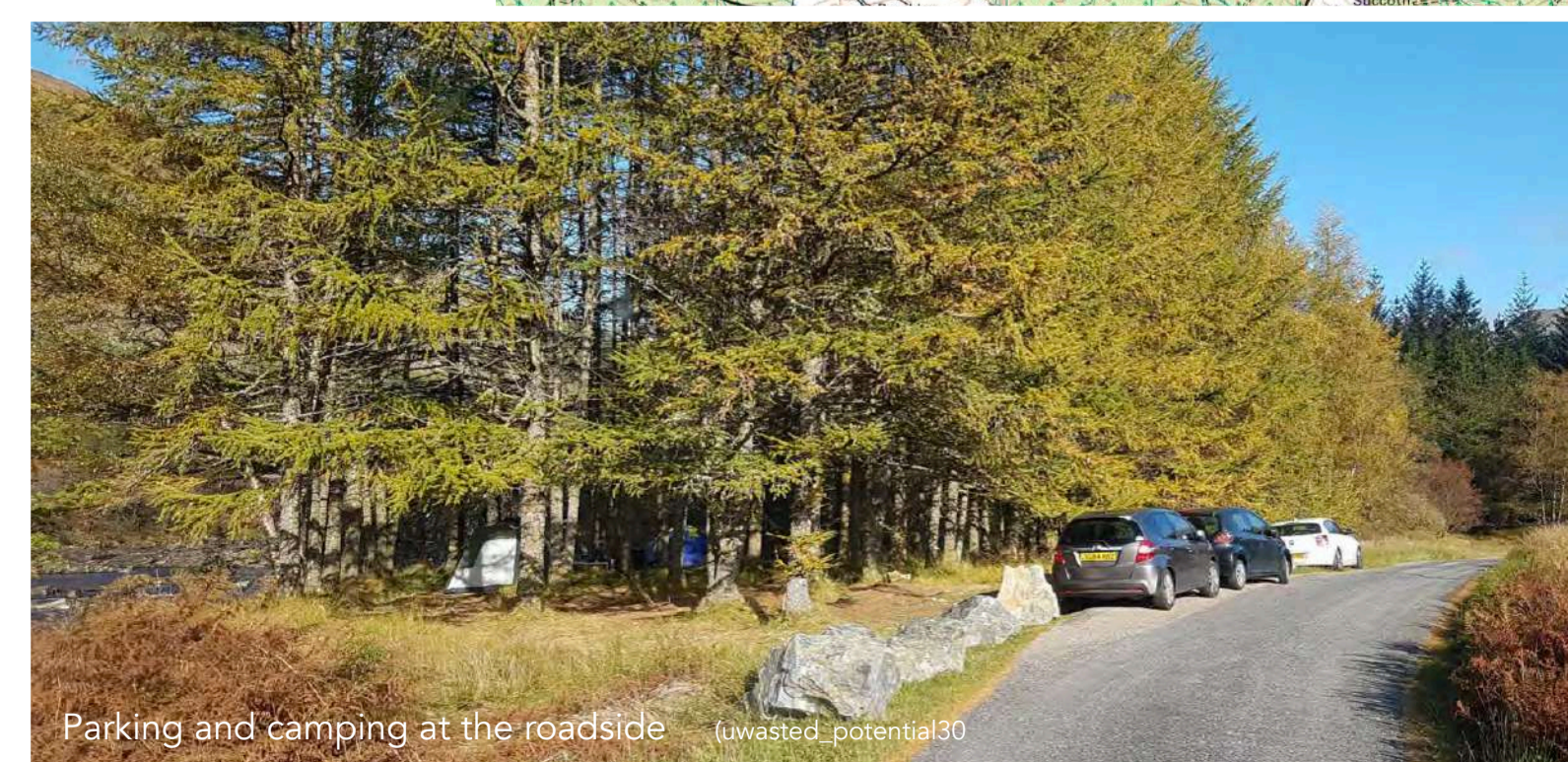
Fireplaces



• Locations of proposals



Campervan driven on to soft grass  
info@searchforsites.co.uk



Parking and camping at the roadside  
lwasted\_potential30



Bridge of Orchy campers  
Caingram.info



## Key principles

- Seek opportunities for parking rationalisation or expansion
- Include improved path connectivity with visitor attractions associated with high demand
- Consider feasibility of campervan & motorhome waste disposal,
- Consider feasibility of toilet solutions
- Maximise landscape and habitat improvements to reduce visitor impacts

These visitor facilities sit within extensive broadleaved, coniferous and Caledonian Pine Forests managed by FLS. Long popular with those engaging in activities such as hill walking, fly fishing and adventure sports including white water rafting, kayaking and ice-climbing. In the last decade these areas have become more oversubscribed as visits for informal camping and camper-vanning have vastly increased.

Visitor numbers are currently in the region of 30,000- 50,000 annually, with the vast majority coming during summer holiday periods and weekends. We are keen to explore opportunities to welcome visitors and set them up for success, ensuring that they have the correct facilities in the right place to have an enjoyable but low impact visit. Such facilities must be proportionate to the demand and to anticipated future changes in visitor numbers.

The proposals are intended to compliment The Glen Orchy and Innishail Community Action Plan, particularly the actions identified in themes 2 (Local Economy & Tourism), 3 (Environment & Heritage) and 5 (Roads and Parking).

We want to ensure that our proposals compliment the ambitions of Sustrans for a cycle path from Tyndrum to Oban, which would utilise routes within the Glen Lochy or Glen Orchy forests, and also with the anticipated "Pilgrims Way" long distance walking route promoted by Nature Scot.

## Glen Lochy (Ben Lui)

The proposals will enlarge this popular formal car park to increase capacity and allow more flexibility in use.

Removal of some of the grass mounds in the car park, which provide only limited landscape benefit, together with localised widening will make the layout more efficient. A rolled stone finish is proposed for the expanded car park, to match the existing.

Timber parking bay markers will help visitors to park in a manner that maximises capacity.

A new area of parking will extend to eastwards, wrapped around the southern end of the natural mound on which the picnic table stands. This new parking will be of reinforced grass/gravel surface and may be closed off in low season to reduce wear, according to the level of use.

The interpretation panel would be relocated next to the adjusted path entrance and aligned in the correct orientation for its graphics.

To prevent parking along the entrance road, which is problematic in busy periods, timber bollards will be used at the bellmouth off the A84. New native woodland planting with deer fencing will be planted to provide visual containment of the expanded car park, and to also limit parking on the entrance road.





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## Catnish car park

This existing car park, popular with canoeists, will be re-opened but reduced in size so that the capacity available for camping is restricted to an appropriate scale.

6 standard parking bays and a parking bay plus turning/drop-off space for canoe trailers will be marked out in the western half of the car park. The eastern part will be broken out and a new diverse habitat of wetland, riparian woodland and wet meadow will be created; this will prevent camping over this part of the site.

A drainage ditch and berm will be formed around the car park to prevent intrusion of vehicles into the meadow.

An accessible path will lead to a picnic area, also forming a convenient path for portage of canoes.

Wetland scrapes, native riparian woodland planting and tall meadow management will break-up the extent of grass available for camping, particularly of large groups.



## Strone Hill Car Park

The car park will be refurbished and sensitively integrated with the landscape, including new native wetland and oak/birch woodland habitat in the disturbed ground beyond.

A picnic site reached by new paths from the car park will offer elevated views across the forest.

The existing trailhead will be given more space to breathe, clear of parked cars.

The turning head formed during recent felling work will be formalised to provide campervan parking, a dedicated 'aire' on the busy A84. This will include adjacent smooth verge areas (protected using timber bollards or boulders) and a chemical toilet disposal point with underground tank.

A standing will be provided for a portaloos or composting toilet.





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## North of Catnish

An attractive place to camp in a woodland clearing next to the river, the proposals address incursion of vehicles onto this grassy glade so that compaction and erosion are prevented and the experience of campers is improved.

Penetration of tracks into the green is prevented using berms and boulders; parking spaces at each end are formalised with durable, level surfacing so that around 6 cars can park off the road. Native woodland planting will strengthen the roadside edge and subdivide the area.



Grassed banks and ditches will be introduced to close off the roadside, replacing some of the boulders currently doing that job

## Laybys along the B8074



Lower area used for camping



Damp area showing vehicle damage

### Tom na Gualainn

This layby serves some attractive streamside camping spots, but intrusion by vehicles on to the soft ground has made it unsightly and reduced available camping. Formalising the surface of the layby and creation of a drainage ditch will allow cars to park perpendicular to the road, whilst preventing them going beyond the layby.

Decompaction of rutted areas and re-establishment of native grass cover will reinstate the streamside area for camping and picnics. Boulders will strengthen this control, and serve as perch seats.





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## Eas Urchaidh Car Park

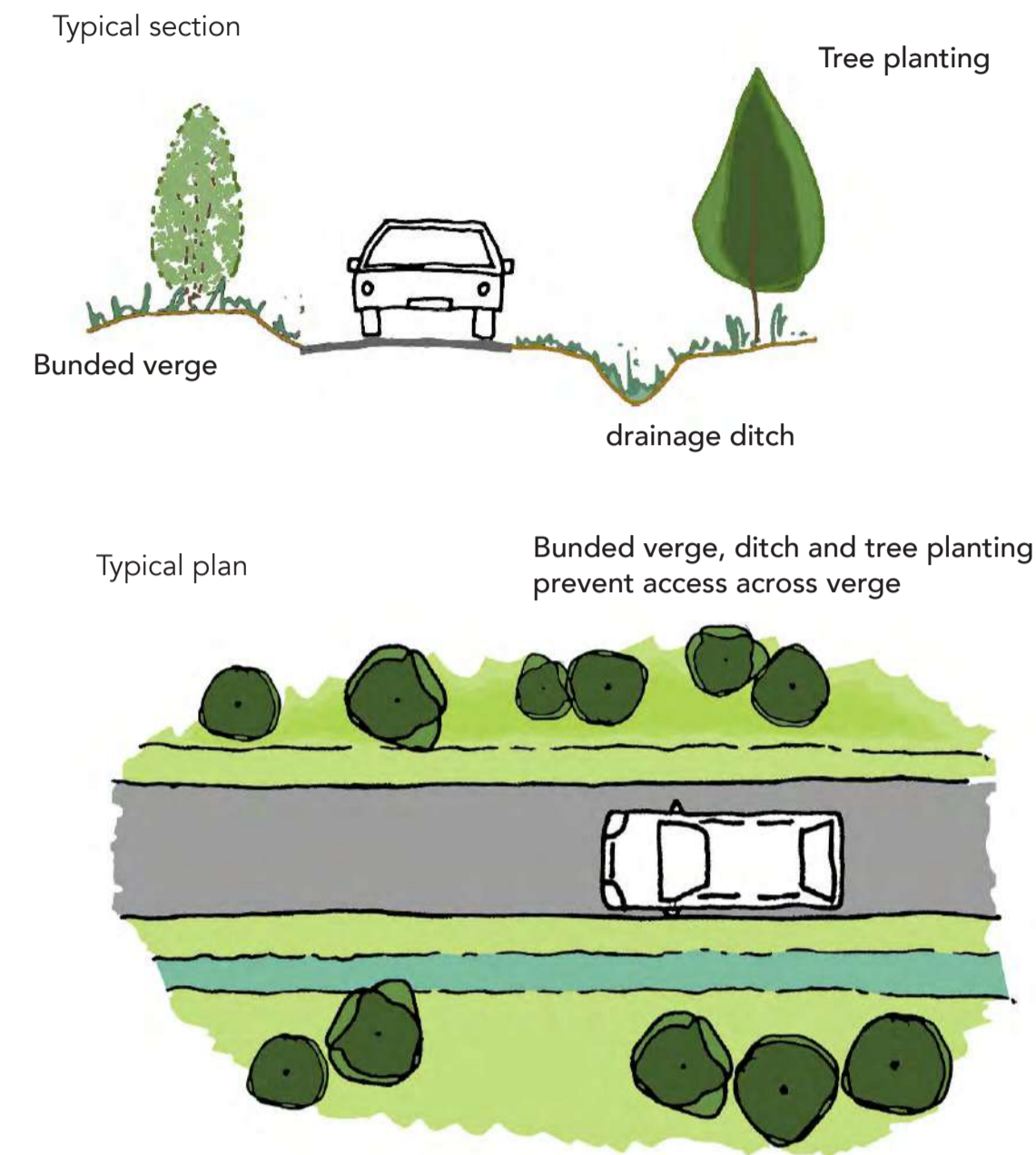
The car park has been recently upgraded but the setting is raw as a result of forest harvesting and the growth of rushes over regraded soil slopes.

The proposal will extend the existing riparian woodland of oak, downy birch and alder across the road and around this car park. Some of the cut slope gradients will be eased to softer slopes.

The bridge has heavy steelwork sides that obscure views of the waterfall, especially for children or those in a wheelchair, and there is extensive wear of the often wet ground amongst trees between the car park and the dramatic waterfall. A new footpath is proposed, leading to a viewpoint accessible to all.



*Proposed viewpoint location set back from edge of falls*



## Verge reinstatements

Glen Lochy has numerous informal laybys worn through use by cars wherever the terrain and vegetation permits access.

This is unsightly and damaging to soils and vegetation, and contributes to excessive numbers of campers. Vehicles are often parked inconsiderately, affecting road safety or even blocking it for farming and forestry vehicles.

The proposals will reshape roadside verges to create an abrupt slope (either bund or ditch, with tree planting in some locations to reinforce the barrier effect. Boulders will be used where necessary, but sunk into the soil so that they appear more natural.



*Existing parking and sign to riverside walk*



*Layby with grass area protected by boulders*

## Riverside Trail

Extension of this small car park, popular with canoeists especially, will increase capacity and help reduce pressure of parking on verges. The passing place will be contained using a berm and ditch, as well as native tree planting and boulders, to prevent parking on the verge (which is an attractive camping spot).



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## Bridge of Orchy

The ambitions here are :

- To provide an attractive setting to the historic bridge, free of vehicles blocking the view
- To return the road back to being just a road, rather than a parking lot
- To define and protect grass areas suitable for camping and picnics
- To improve visibility and primacy of the West Highland Way
- To organise parking into an attractive and efficient layout in a better location with enclosing woodland, so that vehicles no longer dominate all other users and activities.

Replace existing surfacing around the forest road junction with grass verges, protected by timber bollards so that cars cannot park. These area will be for picnics and camping only.

After felling of coniferous forestry, construct a new car park between the forest roads, where it will be contained by landform and new native woodland planting. The car park at Glencoe Visitor Centre is a good model for what can be achieved.

Chemical toilet disposal point with underground tank, located in the car park.

Standing for portaloo or composting toilet, in the car park. This will have an attractive timber enclosure.

Re-arrange signs to guide visitors, and to keep the scenic setting of the bridge uncluttered.

The car park will be of crushed stone surface, within a wooded enclosure of gentle mounding; open birch/rowan woodland planting will allow glimpse views towards the road, aiding arriving drivers to find the car park.

Arrangements for provision and emptying of a litter bin are being investigated for this site, due to the known existing pressures on bins in the village.

