

STRATHERRICK AND FOYERS LOCAL PLACE PLAN

REPORT ON DRAFT PLAN CONSULTATION MAY 2023

HEADLINES

- Consultation on the draft Local Place Plan took place between 15 March and 17 April 2023
- The draft Plan was available for view and comment online and in hard copy.
- 357 different people visited the consultation webpage during the consultation, plus others looking at paper copies of the draft Plan in community venues.
- 40 people commented on the draft Plan (37 online and 3 using paper forms), plus Torness residents thanks to the valuable work of local resident Molly Fraser in collating their views.
- Comments and subsequent changes to the final plan are summarised in section 2 of this document.

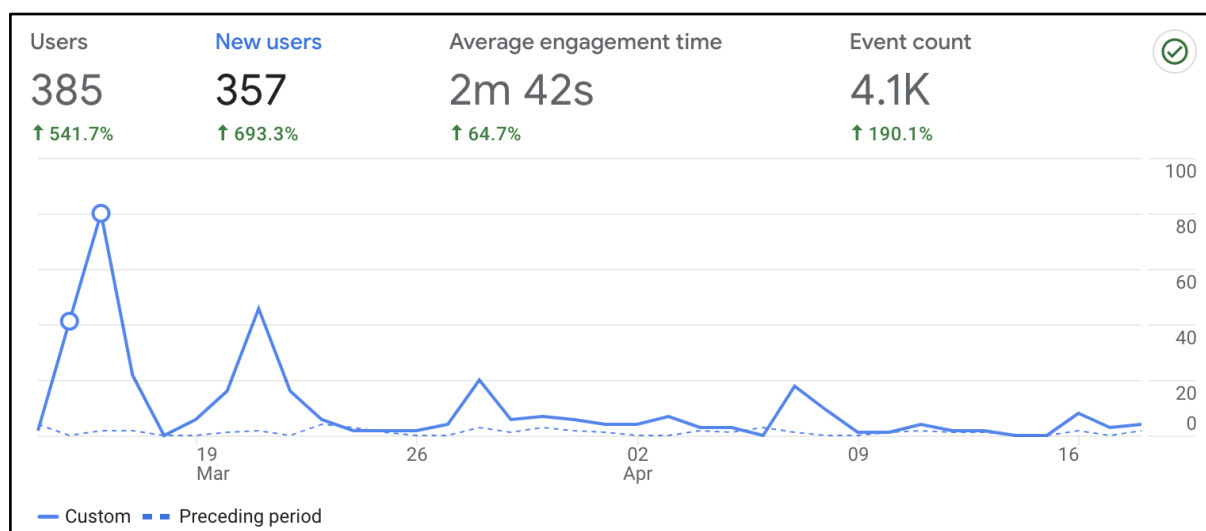
1 THE CONSULTATION

Consultation on the draft Local Place Plan took place between 15 March and 17 April 2023.

The draft Plan was available to view and comment on in a number of ways:

- online at www.communityfuture.net.
- on paper via copies of the draft Plan and paper forms at Foyers Stores, The Hub, Camerons Tearoom and the Wildside Centre.
- through direct contact with the plan facilitator, Nick Wright (e.g. by phone or meeting face to face).

357 different people visited the consultation webpage during the consultation period (see diagram below). They generated over 1,000 page views, meaning that some people visited the page multiple times.



Visits to the consultation webpage during the consultation period (above)

An unknown number of people looked at paper copies of the draft Plan in the four community venues.

40 people commented on the draft Plan (37 online and 3 using paper forms), plus Torness residents thanks to a helpful local resident who visited homes in Torness and collated their views on the draft Local Place Plan.

2 COMMENTS AND CHANGES

Many thanks to all those who took the time to comments on the draft Plan.

Comments are summarised in the left-hand column of the tables below. The table headings reflect the sections used in the Plan. Each section starts on a new page.

Changes to the final plan are summarised in the right-hand column, including corresponding changes to the final Plan where appropriate. Given that the draft Plan was the final consultation, the final Plan has only been changed where there is a compelling reason to do so. It would disenfranchise the wider public if significant changes or proposals were introduced at this late stage.

A few points to note:

- Comments were received from one person unless stated otherwise.
- People's comments have generally been summarised rather than published verbatim in order to respect confidentiality.
- Corrections have not been listed, but all have been helpful in finalising the plan.

GENERAL COMMENTS

COMMENT SUMMARY	CHANGES TO THE FINAL PLAN
Emphasise the community engagement undertaken in preparing the Plan	<i>Extra information added to page 9 of the Plan</i>
Maps are helpful to understand priority projects and how they inter-relate	<i>Noted. All plans have been further updated to improve clarity</i>
“Great ideas – hope they come to fruition”	<i>No change needed</i>
Add summary table showing which external organisations can help with different proposals	<i>Table added on page 44</i>
“I feel like there could have been more posed to the community having gathered together lessons learnt or challenges / issues / opportunities from other place plans completed elsewhere, for comment.”	<i>Suggestion for community engagement rather than a change to the Plan, and a lesson for future plans.</i>

THE AREA AS A WHOLE

COMMENT SUMMARY	CHANGES TO THE FINAL PLAN
Better communication needed between local community and Forestry & Land Scotland	<i>No change but noted for delivery of Community Action Plan</i>
Support Community Rangers focussing on access and education	<i>No change but noted for delivery of Community Action Plan</i>
Location and implementation of community woodland needs careful consideration	<i>No change but noted for delivery of Community Action Plan</i>
Foyers Stores and shop – one comment saying better to list services needed rather than name one business, two comments supporting community purchase	<i>Retention of the Stores and Post Office specifically emerged as a priority through community engagement on the Community Action Plan and again through the Local Place Plan. Removing it would go against an established community aspiration.</i>
Produce leaflet and webpage of all proposed cycle/walking routes	<i>This Community Action Plan proposal is being actioned at the moment. No change to the Local Place Plan.</i>
Grants should be made available for people to upgrade their homes with renewable energy systems / insulation and for driving lessons	<i>These actions relate to the Community Action Plan rather than the Local Place Plan. No change to the Local Place Plan.</i>
Suggestions for more information on: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Minimum parking standards for new rural homes to avoid on-street parking • Space for bins in new developments • Safety equipment where access is created to lochs • % threshold for housing as short-term lets for different hamlets 	<i>These suggestions relate to detailed technical matters that are already controlled through planning policy (parking, bins, safety equipment) or require detailed housing needs assessments beyond the scope of this Plan (% thresholds for short-term lets).</i>
Enhance habitats, to increase biodiversity (such as native woodland between Inverfarigaig SSSI and Errogie) and tackle water quality issues (e.g. blue-green algae in Loch Mhor).	<i>Map updated on page 13 of the Plan to include protected natural sites (SSSIs etc) and additional text on page 17 to emphasise importance of nature and biodiversity</i>
Create community growing spaces (e.g. polytunnels) in settlements	<i>References added on page 1, under 'Create and maintain local community hubs', and in settlement sections</i>

ERROGIE

COMMENT SUMMARY	CHANGES TO THE FINAL PLAN
Triangle of green space at junction should be prioritised for housing.	<i>Housing is a priority in the Community Action Plan and the Local Place Plan, but this site is difficult to develop for good quality homes with privacy. It is small and a difficult shape, with three public frontages. There are other locations in the village which would make better housing sites.</i>
Proposal for community hub at Errogie Kirk – update list of possible uses to reflect current proposals, ensure there is an outdoor play/planting area	<i>Text updated on page 24 of the Plan</i>
Lack of clarity about why the community hub proposal for the former Errogie Kirk is included	<i>The proposal is part of a network of community hubs contained in the Community Action Plan. The kirk is in community ownership and is an obvious location for the Errogie community hub.</i>
Support for reduced speeds in the village and safer pedestrian infrastructure, and suggestion of reducing vehicle speeds around the Farraline junction (3 comments)	<i>Mostly already included, but text on page 24 updated in relation to the Farraline junction</i>
Support for safe cycle/walkway links to nearby villages (2 comments)	<i>Already included on page 17</i>
Better access points and parking to Loch Mhor, positioned to avoid disruption to residents (2 comments)	<i>Existing reference updated on page 25</i>
Plan should say more about protecting and enhancing nature, for example native woodlands and water quality in lochs	<i>Additional reference included in the “Area as a whole” section on page 17</i>

FOYERS AND BOLESKINE

Foyers

COMMENT SUMMARY	CHANGES TO THE FINAL PLAN
Concern about building on “Simpsons’ field” identified in point 10 because of nature conservation interest	<i>Site has been made less prominent in plan on page 26. Text on page 28 of the Plan (proposal 10) already makes clear that this is only a possible site and will need further assessment.</i>
New affordable homes should be focussed in the village rather than in the surrounding countryside	<i>Text on page 28 (proposal 10) amended to make this clear</i>
Local cafes and hotels should be identified as local assets for residents and visitors (3 comments)	<i>Map on page 26 and point 4 on Page 27 updated accordingly</i>
Plan should say more about protecting and enhancing nature, for example control of rhododendrons	<i>Additional reference included in the “Area as a whole” section on page 17</i>
Riverside Field should be removed or developed sensitively to respect local sensitivities and include natural space (2 comments)	<i>Riverside Field recreational facilities have been granted planning-in-principle and are included in the Community Action Plan. The Local Place Plan states that the details should be sensitive to the concerns and aspirations of adjacent residents and to the local landscape.</i>
Riverside Field should be completed	<i>No change required</i>
Support for public slipway proposed in the draft plan (2 comments)	<i>No change required</i>
Historic bridge over the River Foyers at Lower Foyers should be repaired for pedestrian and cycle use (3 comments)	<i>Included on page 29</i>
Proposals 14 and 16 to improve Local Path Networks and South Loch Ness Trail – add Forestry and Land Scotland as an external partner	<i>Added on page 29</i>
Path improvements between Lower Foyers and the Falls of Foyers should be a priority	<i>No change needed</i>
“I fully agree with this draft plan for Foyers. It is very important to leave our next generation with something substantially better than what we have now.”	<i>No change needed</i>

Boleskine

COMMENT SUMMARY	CHANGES TO THE FINAL PLAN
Concern about the historic open landscape being used for development (6 comments), with some suggesting that the wording could be strengthened	<i>Proposal 5 on page 31 makes clear that this historic open landscape should not be developed. The wording and map have been strengthened but it is up to the Council to translate the aspiration into planning policy.</i>
<p>Boleskine House:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Concerns about its reconstruction, particularly the use of community funds and proposed bus shelter (4 comments) • Support for its reconstruction, including public viewpoint, paths, toilets and visitor facilities (5 comments) 	<p><i>The wording and the plan have been updated to reflect the range of comments received.</i></p> <p><i>The range of public facilities is noted in the plan, with the expectation of community involvement as things moved forward.</i></p> <p><i>However controversial its past or future might be, Boleskine House is a historic listed building of national and local heritage importance which is on the national Buildings at Risk Register. Its inclusion in the Local Place Plan does not mean that it will receive community funds.</i></p> <p><i>The proposed bus signs/shelter would be useful for visitors to the historic graveyard / church and local residents, whether or not Boleskine House is rebuilt.</i></p>
Support for maintenance and improvement of historic Boleskine Graveyard, which should also involve South Loch Ness Heritage Group.	<i>Update reference on page 31 to include South Loch Ness Heritage Group.</i>
Concern that the proposed 30mph speed limit is neither desirable nor practical	<i>The essence of the proposal is to reduce speeds in order to improve road safety for pedestrians and cyclists in particular. A speed limit is one of a number of suggested measures. The Council will ultimately decide on the most appropriate package of measures.</i>
Support for proposed road improvements between Boleskine and Foyers	<i>No change needed</i>
Proposal 7 to improve South Loch Ness Trail – add Forestry and Land Scotland as an external partner	<i>Added on page 31</i>

GORTHLECK

COMMENT SUMMARY	CHANGES TO THE FINAL PLAN
Include off-road cycling/walking route between Gorthleck and Foyers	<i>This is part of the community-wide network of multi-use routes linking villages, described on page 17 of the Plan</i>
Identify location near the school for community growing (2 comments) and play, such as the existing yard just west of the school that is currently occupied by caravans	<i>The need for community growing space has been added on pages 15 and 32 of the Plan. The yard is one of a number of possible locations for community growing and play which need more detailed assessment and discussion with landowners.</i>
Add option of shared equity homes for the Gorthleck housing site, to reduce costs for prospective residents	<i>Text on page 33 (proposal 7) amended</i>
Existing play area is likely to revert to croft land – inappropriate to suggest the play area should remain in that location	<i>Remove location of play area from map on pages 32-33 (proposal 3)</i>
Ensure continued existence of Stratherrick Hall	<i>This is contained in the plan (Gorthleck proposal 1), no change needed</i>

INVERFARIGAIG

COMMENT SUMMARY	CHANGES TO THE FINAL PLAN
Septic tank is maintained in good order, repairs are not required (2 comments)	<i>Remove reference to the septic tank (proposal 9)</i>
Inverfarigaig SSSI is sensitive and should be treated very carefully (5 comments). The proposed footpath to Dun Deardail would be damaging and should be removed (3 comments) – instead there should be interpretation in Inverfarigaig or Errogie	<i>Delete reference to footpath from page 36 (proposal 14), add reference to interpretation in proposed community hubs and by community rangers</i>
Concern about removal of hedge by proposed community hub (proposal 10)	<i>Plan does not propose removal of hedge</i>
Bus stop proposals – a plastic bus shelter would look awful	<i>Add note to page 35 (proposal 5) stating that the shelter should be sensitively designed with community input – and for similar proposals in Boleskine and Torness</i>
Provide information at bus stops	<i>Add to plan on page 35</i>
“I really like the suggestion of the new ferry link from the restored pier”	<i>No change needed</i>
Proposals 16 and 17 to improve Trail of the 7 Lochs and South Loch Ness Trail – add Forestry and Land Scotland as an external partner	<i>Added on page 36</i>

TORNESS

These comments are based on engagement with residents throughout Torness, with huge thanks to local resident Molly Fraser. Only a summary is presented below; the comments can be read in full in the appendix.

COMMENT SUMMARY	CHANGES TO THE FINAL PLAN
<p>Proposal 1: field sports centre</p> <p>General feeling that this would not see much use as a community hub. At the most, all that would be needed is a small space for community gatherings, children's events or a place to pick up prescriptions. Suggested that Errogie Kirk should be the main community hub for both villages when up and running. Places for community growing and for children to meet up were also suggested, but no particular locations.</p>	<p><i>Plan updated accordingly</i></p>
<p>Proposal 2: bus shelter/larder</p> <p>Widespread support for a small, traditionally and sensitively designed bus shelter, located to avoid interfering with parking outside the houses or the noticeboard (e.g. at the bridge) and ideally with cycle storage.</p> <p>Little interest in a community larder.</p> <p>A postbox would be useful (nearest are Dores and Errogie).</p>	<p><i>Plan updated accordingly</i></p>
<p>Proposals 3-4: road safety</p> <p>Support for these important proposals as there are currently 20 children living in and around Torness.</p> <p>Suggested addition: replacement Torness road signs and direction signposts (with Gaelic place names).</p> <p>Suggested addition: repairs to damaged roads, especially the Carnoch-Croftdhu road above Errogie.</p>	<p><i>Plan updated accordingly</i></p>
<p>Proposal 5: Trail of the 7 Lochs</p> <p>General support for more accessible walking/cycling routes and forest walks like this, particularly with interpretation of history and heritage.</p> <p>.../continued overleaf</p>	<p><i>Plan updated accordingly</i></p>

<p>Proposal 6: Loch Ceo Glais Support for these proposals. Add 'no litter' signage, picnic bench and better parking.</p>	<p><i>Plan updated accordingly</i></p>
<p>Proposal 7: affordable homes These would be welcomed, particularly for young people. Suggested additions: improving energy efficiency and insulation on existing homes and installing heat pumps</p>	<p><i>Already included in the plan on pages 20-22 and 39</i></p>
<p>Other environmentally friendly suggestions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Smaller/electric buses and later times • More trees/hedges for biodiversity 	<p><i>Transport and nature conservation are covered in the Community Action Plan</i></p>
<p>Improve broadband</p>	<p><i>This is covered in the Community Action Plan, and has also been raised separately with broadband provider Cromarty Forth Wireless Network</i></p>

WHITEBRIDGE

COMMENT SUMMARY	CHANGES TO THE FINAL PLAN
Develop Wildside Centre for visitors (e.g. campervan stop, toilets, nature trails etc) and community growing / nature conservation	<i>Added on page 41 of Plan</i>
Improve community access to Whitebridge woodland plantation	<i>Added on page 41</i>
Proposal 6 to improve South Loch Ness Trail – add Forestry and Land Scotland as an external partner	<i>Added on page 41</i>
Improve community transport for Whitebridge Hotel customers	<i>Added on page 41</i>
Extend parking and develop garage facilities for Thain Road residents	<i>Added on page 42</i>
Enable affordable purchase of croft land to avoid decrofting, and enable possibility of off-grid eco-homes	<i>Added on page 21</i>