

Report to Partnership Meeting 11th September 2026

RESEARCH AND STRATEGY DELIVERY

Fort William Integrated Transport Plan Update

PURPOSE OF REPORT

To provide Members on progress to develop an Integrated Transport Plan for Fort William in accordance with Recommendation 32 of the second Strategic Transport Projects Review (STPR2) and other parallel work within Fort William which HITRANS are leading or supporting.

Background

HITRANS chair a Client Delivery Group that is overseeing the development of an Integrated Transport Plan (ITP) for Fort William. Membership consists of Transport Scotland, HITRANS and The Highland Council who have provided funding to support the commission and have responsibility for the assurance of the outputs. Highlands and Islands Enterprise and Fort William 2040 are also represented on the CDG in an advisory role.

Transport Scotland published STPR2 in December 2022. Recognising the need to address the challenges across different transport modes in Fort William, STPR2 recommended the development of an Integrated Transport Plan (ITP) for the town:

Recommendation 32: Trunk road and motorway renewal for reliability, resilience and safety, specifically recommends continued and increased investment in the trunk road and motorway network over and above current maintenance levels to keep the network reliable and resilient for road users. Potential measures would include, but are not limited to, carriageway and structure schemes, strengthening of major bridges, removal of accessibility barriers and development of integrated transport plans for Fort William and the A90 Kingsway through Dundee

The Fort William ITP aims to support a connected, inclusive, safe and resilient Fort William. It is seeking to address long-standing issues including the reliability and resilience of the trunk road network in the town.

Fort William Integrated Transport Plan Update

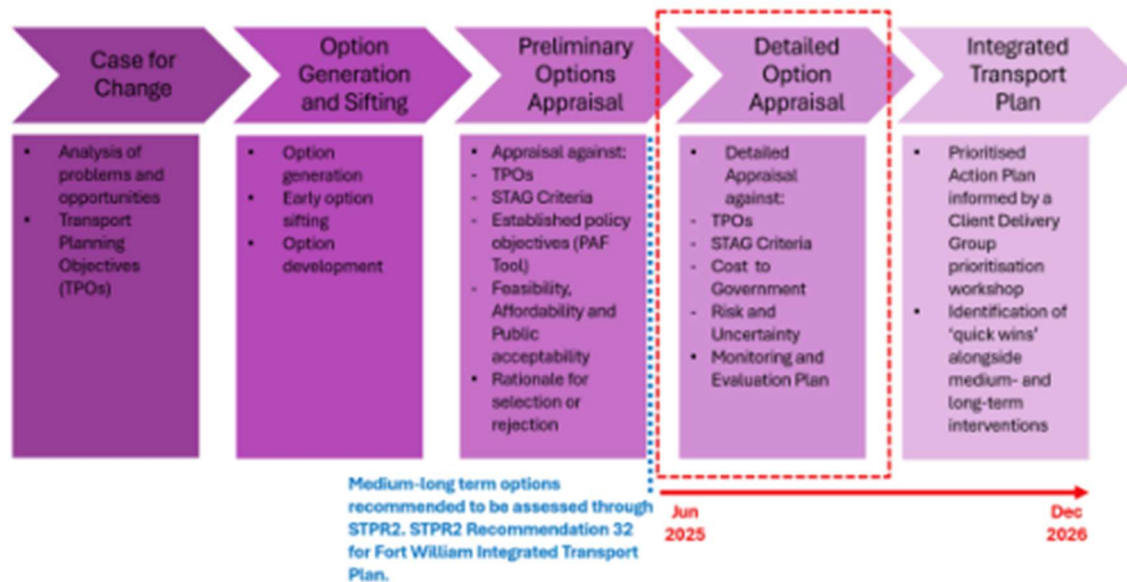
HITRANS appointed a partnership between Aecom and Stantec to undertake the 18 month study in May 2025. Initial work focused on the refresh and validation of the evidence-base and findings of work previously undertaken. Extensive traffic data collection was undertaken in August and November 2025 to support the development of an updated transport model that is being used to support the appraisal of the 34 shortlisted options that were identified to address the study objectives.

In spring 2026, the project team and client group undertook wide public and stakeholder consultation. This included a drop in session at the Nevis Centre in Fort William and a door drop

of the leaflet prompting the consultation to every household within the study catchment area. The consultation materials were also available for the public to view in the library for the duration of the consultation. The outputs of this consultation are attached in the Engagement Summary report and can also be found on the dedicated page for the project on the HITRANS website. https://hitrans.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2026/08/2026_07_01_Engagement-Report_v2.pdf.

Next Steps

The study is nearing the completion of the Detailed Options Appraisal stage. It is hoped that the outputs of this work will be shared at the next HITRANS Partnership meeting in November and at a number of local member and community forums in Fort William. The outputs of the Detailed Appraisal and subsequent engagement will inform the preparation of final Integrated Transport Plan towards the end of this year.



Bus Infrastructure Fund

In addition to the Fort William Integrated Transport Plan a number of other transport projects are being progressed in parallel by partners. These include projects that The Highland Council have been successful in applying for through the Bus Infrastructure Fund administered by Transport Scotland. HITRANS has supported the Highland Council in progressing the delivery of two of these projects that relate directly to options considered within the Integrated Transport Plan.

1. A feasibility study to consider options for upgrading or relocating the Bus Station
2. Redesign of the A82 / Nevis Terrace / Middle Street Junction to facilitate signalisation with bus priority.

Fort William Interchange Feasibility Study

A copy of the draft study is included in Appendix B to this report. The report considers options for improving the bus station facilities and their integration with the rail station and wider town centre within the area set out in Figure 1 below.

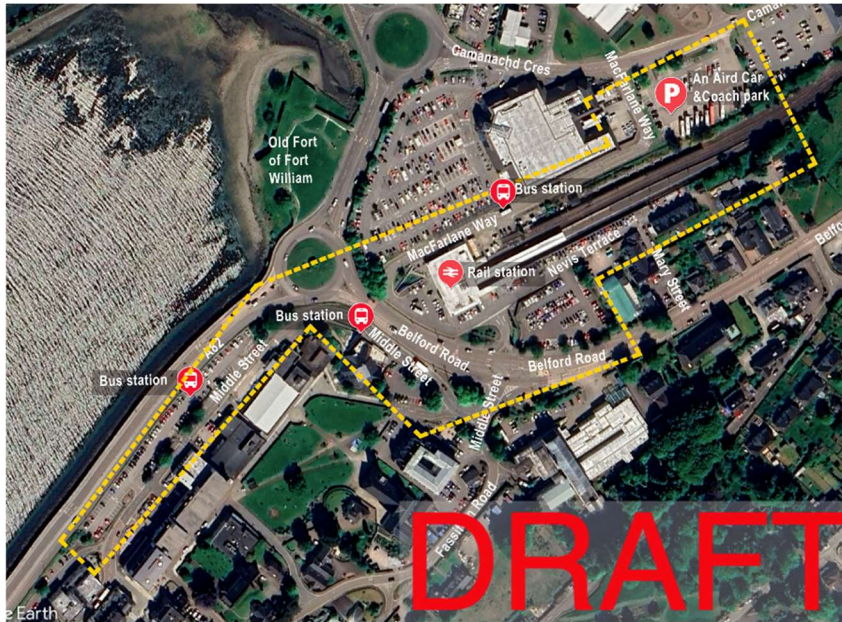


Fig 1. Study boundary for Fort William Interchange Feasibility Study

Options were considered in the following context:

- Do Minimum – Improvements to the existing structure
- Short Term – What can we do on the existing site
- Long Term – Futureproof options for 2040 and beyond

3 potential locations for the bus station were considered In the initial feasibility site review

1. The existing site on Macfarlane Way
2. The Nevis Terrace council carpark
3. Town side sites such as Middle Street Car Park

The draft study recommends a phased approach to development with the current site identified as the preferred site for developing an enhanced integrated public transport interchange. The elements of this are set out below:

- A new 8 Bay sawtooth facility with weather protection over the boarding points
- Automatic doors and a fully enclosed environment
- Translucent roof to maximise natural lighting
- Automatic LED lighting to provide a light and safe environment
- Customer Information screens centrally and at each boarding point
- CCTV coverage throughout including boarding points
- Options for Layover and Coach drop off to be considered
- Wider concourse through removal of the railway side footpath and narrowing of the carriageway to maximise concourse space
- Long term vision to provide an at grade crossing direct to the High Street with a landscaped forecourt providing a sense of arrival in Fort William.

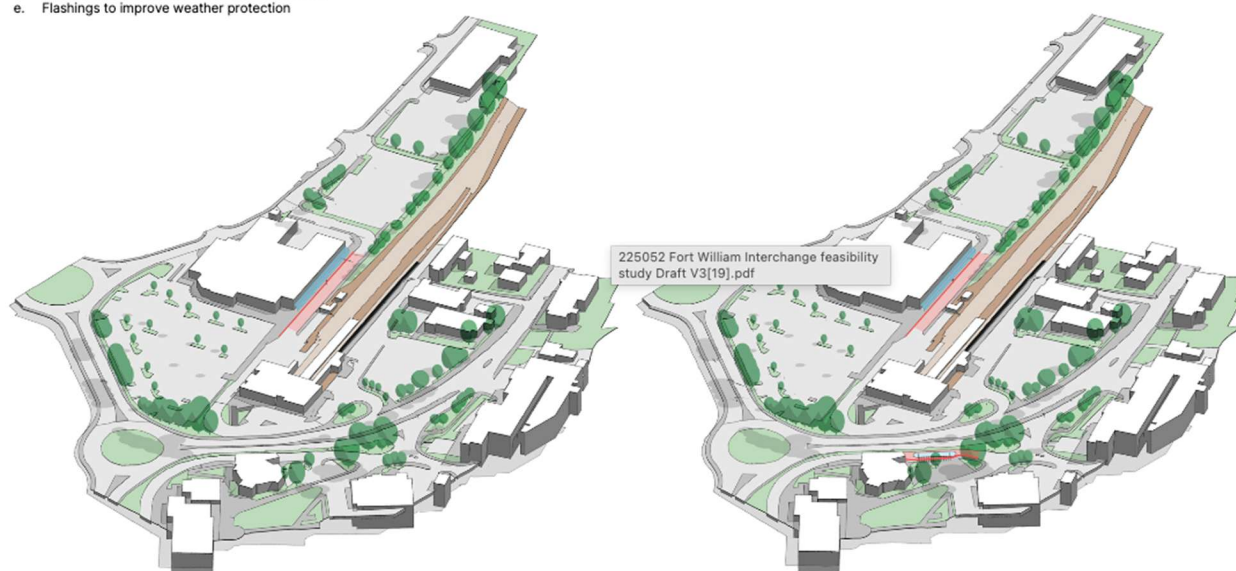
Phase 1

Refurbishment of the existing Bus Shelter behind Morrison's to include:

- a. CIS
- b. CCTV
- c. Lighting
- d. Glass Screens to the end of the current stands
- e. Flashings to improve weather protection

Phase 2

Reformatting of the carpark behind Nevis Sports to allow access from the rear with the existing single stand moved from its constrained position and extended into a double stand with new shelter serving South bound services. This can be delivered without major approvals using BIF funding.



Colleagues in the Highland Council have already applied for funding from the Bus Infrastructure Fund Tier 2 to support the implementation of Phases 1 and 2. The full outputs of the study will be considered at the Lochaber Ward Business Meeting on 7th September. The revised junction design for the A82 at the Rail Station is being appraised as a potential online improvement within the Integrated Transport Plan.

Recommendation

Members are asked to:

- i. Note this report including Appendix A: Fort William Integrated Transport Plan Summary Engagement Report and Appendix B: Fort William Interchange Feasibility Report

Risk Register

RTS Delivery

Impact - Positive

Comment – This work supports RTS Strategic priorities to enhance regional connectivity.

Policy

Impact - Positive

Comment – This work supports several policies set out in the RTS including; improving journey time reliability and network resilience, promotion of sustainable transport options in Fort William.

Financial

Impact – Positive

Budget line and value – HITRANS has allocated 25% of funding up to a value of £100,000 towards the undertaking of an Integrated Transport Plan for Fort William.

The Bus Infrastructure Fund projects that HITRANS are supporting deliver are fully funded through grant awards from Transport Scotland following successful applications by The Highland Council.

Equality

Impact – Positive

Comment – Improving regional connectivity helps improve the competitiveness of businesses in the West Highlands and improving journey times in Fort William helps local bus operators provide more reliable public transport services.

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Date:	1st September 2026