



# FIT FOR OUR HIGHLAND CITY: AN ACTIVE TRAVEL NETWORK FOR EVERYONE

## Inverness City Active Travel Network

14th July 2017



# Executive Summary

## Geàrr-chunntas Gníomhach

**Our vision is to create a connected city fit for the future which will promote active travel, improve community health and reduce short car journeys.**

**Our programme introduces exemplar, high quality Dutch-influenced active travel infrastructure that will create a healthy, inclusive and attractive public realm. Our goal is that through this programme, Inverness will become the benchmark liveable city in Scotland.**

The case for our investment is very strong. The current level of cycling in Inverness for travel to work by bike is just under 6%. We want to regenerate and support our city centre's economy, improve accessibility to jobs and education, maintain a population balanced by age, strengthen our successful neighbourhoods, and emphasise the city's role as the gateway to the highlands and junction of four important National Cycle Network routes. All of these things are essential to our long term economic success.

Active travel will help us begin to address the endemic of sedentary lifestyles, addressing heart disease, cancers, type 2 diabetes, pollution-related illness, and mental health. In the process we will reduce the cost burden on the NHS and social care services; we will enable people to live longer and fulfilled lives in good health.

But we can only achieve this by facilitating and embedding a culture of active travel, ideally from an early age. Our bid acknowledges the importance of creating conditions in which parents feel confident allowing their children to play out and travel under their own steam.

Our bid underlines our firm belief that that once the first two projects - the East-West route and ATN4 Bought Road route - are open and successful, people will ask for more. Since these routes are flat and serve areas that already have higher than average levels of cycling, we will be well on our way to meeting the CAPS target of 10% of journeys cycled by 2020.

The key benefits we seek are as follows:

- Better health through active travel
- A liveable city for children and young people
- Support for our city centre economy
- A balanced population, future-proofing our economy
- Promoting tourism
- Tackling deprivation and inequality

Our long term intention is to deliver the entire Inverness City Active Travel Network, starting in years 1-3 with the East-West Route and Active Travel Network route 4. ICATN is important for us, therefore as opportunities arise we will also apply for funding to deliver other parts of the network.

The East-West Route and Active Travel Network Route 4

1. ***Dutch inspired segregated cycle tracks, a new section of pedestrian footway, bus stop bypasses and signalised junction crossings feature on Millburn Road.***

The concept designs extend our commitment to redistributing space to more sustainable and equitable forms of transport. These designs have been checked by Dutch engineers and modified since engagement and feature fully separate two way cycle tracks and new pedestrian footways where they are currently missing. Loading bays and bus stops are proposed on the south side of Millburn Road. Benefits to all include new landscaping and tree planting, and

pedestrians further away from motor traffic in a more pleasant environment.

2. **A Dutch turbo inspired roundabout** with a tight turning geometry that will maintain capacity whilst reducing traffic speeds, improving safety and ease of crossing each arm. This will improve safety for pedestrians and cyclists crossing each arm and provide more space for active travel infrastructure at this location.
3. **A bicycle street, or 'fietsstraat'**. This Dutch influenced design gives cycles priority over motor vehicles in a low speed residential street. Signs at the entrance to the street, together with cycle-friendly traffic calming make this clear. Benefits to other street users include reduced speeds where people live and a safer and more comfortable environment for residents
4. **New signals at Raigmore Interchange** that give pedestrians and cyclists more time to cross, and more certainty about where traffic is coming from. A new ramp will also be built, taking pedestrians and cyclists up to the Raigmore Estate and Golden Bridge. This connection will link the University of the Highlands and Islands Inverness Campus, the urban extension to the east, and Raigmore Hospital, to the city centre
5. **A new active travel route ATN4** connecting the Caledonian Canal and West Link to the city centre along Bught Road, which will reduce traffic speeds and improve safety for park users. The opportunity will be taken to complete missing footway links and create a landscape that befits the riverside location and the Highland Games.

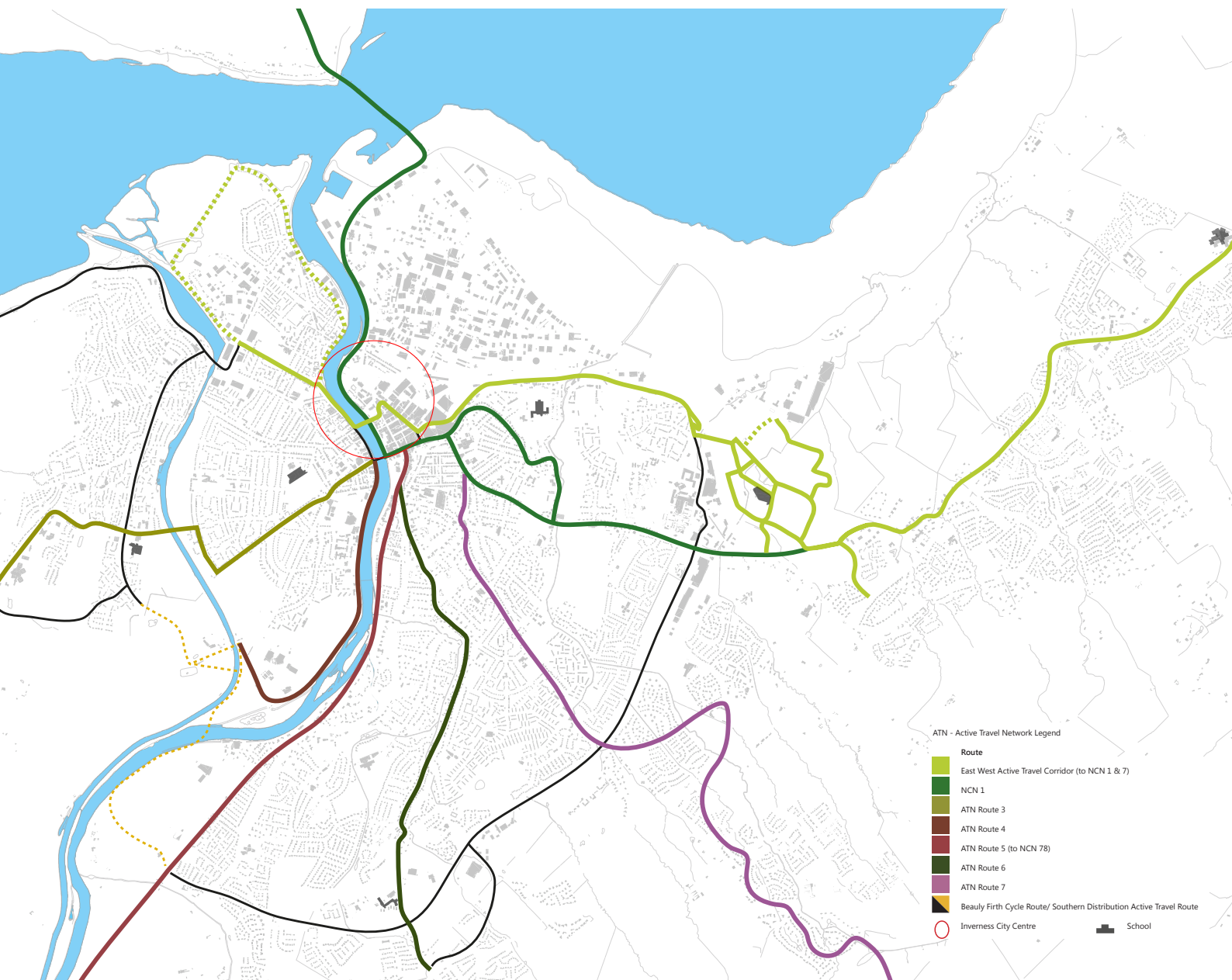
These proposals will be paired with a comprehensive landscape, smarter travel and wayfinding strategies that reflect, respect and integrate the city's natural and cultural heritage, represented by the Gaelic language and Ogham alphabet.

We have already established preliminary Governance, timescales and programme management arrangements.

A monitoring and benefits-realisation framework has been prepared. We will collaborate with partners to ensure we capture all of the relevant data sets.

Through the overall Highland Council investment of £7.169M, which includes the West Link Active Travel infrastructure, Inverness Station Cycling Infrastructure, Safer Routes to School, health and active travel promotion, and the potential funding award of £6.595M from Community Links PLUS we estimate that over 20km of the Inverness City Active Travel Network will be created or enhanced for existing and new cyclists.

We will continue to work with our partners and proactively engage with key stakeholders including, HiTRANS, NHS (Highland), Highlife Highland, Scottish Canals, Highlands and Islands Enterprise, BID, Velocity, Highland Cycle Campaign and Living Streets to deliver the programme.



ACTIVE  CYCLE  WALK  INVERNESS



“We have been very encouraged to see this Community Links Plus project develop, following the 2016 application, as it ties into several of the key priorities within the Inverness Active Travel Audit and in particular improvements to the East Inverness Active Travel Corridor. We welcome the focus on Inverness, which, as the capital of the Highlands and an area of further expansion for housing and development, has great potential for reaching the CAPS vision of 10% everyday cycling by 2020.”

**Neil Macrae**, Partnership Manager, Hitrans



“Inverness is a vibrant, growing city, which enjoys an increasing range and quality of services and attractions. Creating useable and attractive routes to, and between, areas of the city allows a level of access which both reduces inequalities for our resident population and encourages visitors to utilise active modes of transport. From a Health Improvement perspective, increasing active travel opportunities is arguably the best way to increase general physical activity levels and achieve the associated health gain.”

**Dan Jenkins**, NHS Health Promotion Specialist, NHS Highland



“Active travel is one of the key contributory factors to making it easier for people to live healthy lives as well as contributing to improving the quality of life of local people in other ways.”

**Ian Murray**, Chief Executive, Highlife Highland



“Scottish Canals reaffirms their support for Highland Council’s bid to the Sustrans Community Links Plus Stage 3 Bid for Inverness. Scottish Canals is a key member of the National Walking and Cycling Network and we view this bid as supportive of this initiative. Scottish Canals also has a joint venture partnership relationship with The Highland Council to bring forward initiatives which support growth along the Caledonian Canal.”

**Richard Millar**, Director of Infrastructure, Scottish Canals



“Highlands and Islands Enterprise understands that The Highland Council’s Community Links Plus (CLP) proposal will link into the existing cycle/ footpath network at Inverness Campus and therefore will further improve amenities for cyclists and add to connections across the city. Highlands and Islands Enterprise is supportive of initiatives which encourage active travel and support the growth of Inverness Campus”

**Ruaraidh MacNeil**, Project Director - Inverness Campus, Highlands and Islands Enterprise

“At the Board Meeting the directors welcomed the revised plans acknowledging that The Highland Council had recognised and acted upon the major concerns of BID and the businesses. Given the changes made by The Highland Council plus the undertaking that BID and the businesses would be consulted and involved in discussions on the arrangements from the start of the next stage of the scheme (if successful for funding), the Board agreed that they were now in a position to give in principle support to the application on the basis that the stated agreed design amendments will be included in the application for funding being submitted. We trust that The Highland council will be successful with this application.”

**Mike Smith**, Manager, Inverness Business Improvement District (BID)



“Velocity is delighted that the Highland Council’s exciting proposals have been successfully shortlisted for the Community Links Plus award. We are wholeheartedly throwing our passion and enthusiasm behind this project.”

**Ferga Perry**, Projects Coordinator, Velocity Café and Bicycle Workshop



“The improvements on Abban Street and Bught Road are very welcome but the protected cycle track and turbo roundabout on Millburn Road are particularly bold and will make a significant change in Inverness. The re-allocation of road space will be of immediate benefit to cyclists, pedestrians and bus users. But it will also serve as a model of what can be achieved for future projects in Inverness, the Highlands, and elsewhere in Scotland.”

**Brian MacKenzie** Convener, Highland Cycle Campaign



“The plans of the Concept proposals which I recently studied are a significant move in the right direction. I am impressed by the principle that motorised vehicles in Abban Street take second place to cyclists and pedestrians. The provision of a dedicated two-way cycleway on the south side of Millburn Road instead of a section of roadway and the provision of a clearly identified footpath is a great improvement on what is there at present. It will also remove the problem of cars parked on the footpath. This will be the first dedicated two-way cycleway in Inverness and it will be necessary to educate motorists and cyclists on how to use it at the junctions.”

**Graham Turley**, Living Streets



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