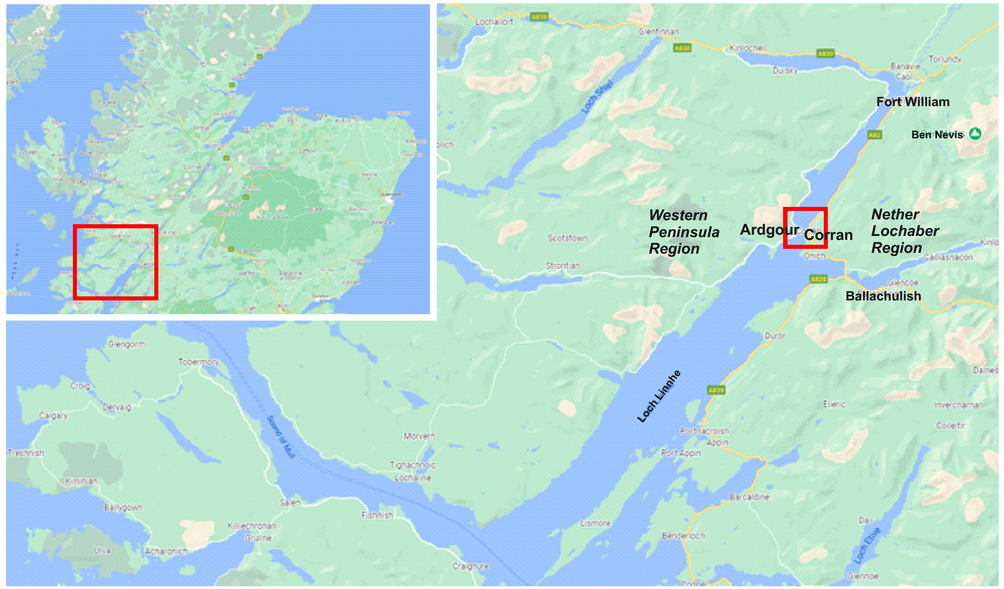
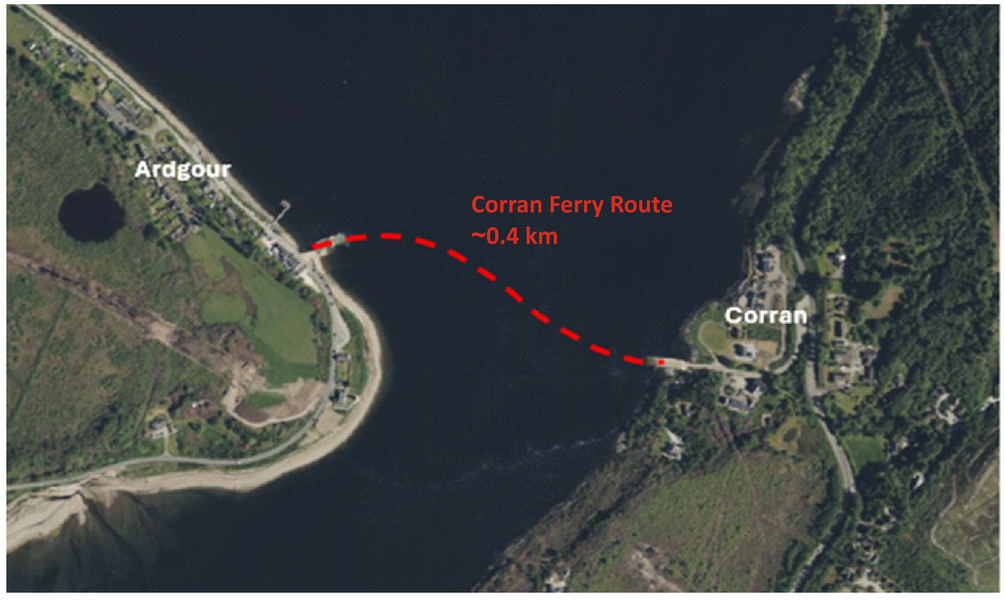
Case for Change

The Highland Council are proposing to construct new infrastructure on the Ardgour and Nether Lochaber sides of the Corran Narrows to improve the Corran Ferry service and support the operation of a new electric vessel.

Current state:

- **Current ferries are ageing.** Sourcing parts is becoming ever more difficult and expensive, threatening reliability and service resilience. The *MV Maid of Glencoul* has been in service since 1976 and the *MV Corran* has been in service since 2001.
- **Infrastructure restrictions on vessels.** Design of the existing slipways does not accommodate the more common straight-through roll-on roll-off (Ro-Ro) ferries.
- **Existing pressure on marshalling capacity.** Queuing vehicles back up onto busy roads during peak periods, in particular, the A82.
- **No overnight berth. Vessels overnight on 'swing' moorings.** Vessel-to-vessel transfer for crew is high risk and has been phased out elsewhere in Scotland.
- **Largest commercial vehicle access to the peninsula is limited** by *MV Maid of Glencoul* height and weight restrictions when the *MV Corran* is away for annual refit.
- **Undesirable route alternatives.** When the ferry is not operating, the alternative route by road can be up to 2 hours, with restrictions for tall vehicles due to a low bridge.
- **National Commitment to Net Zero by 2045.** National and local policies require new developments to support the transition to low carbon energy.









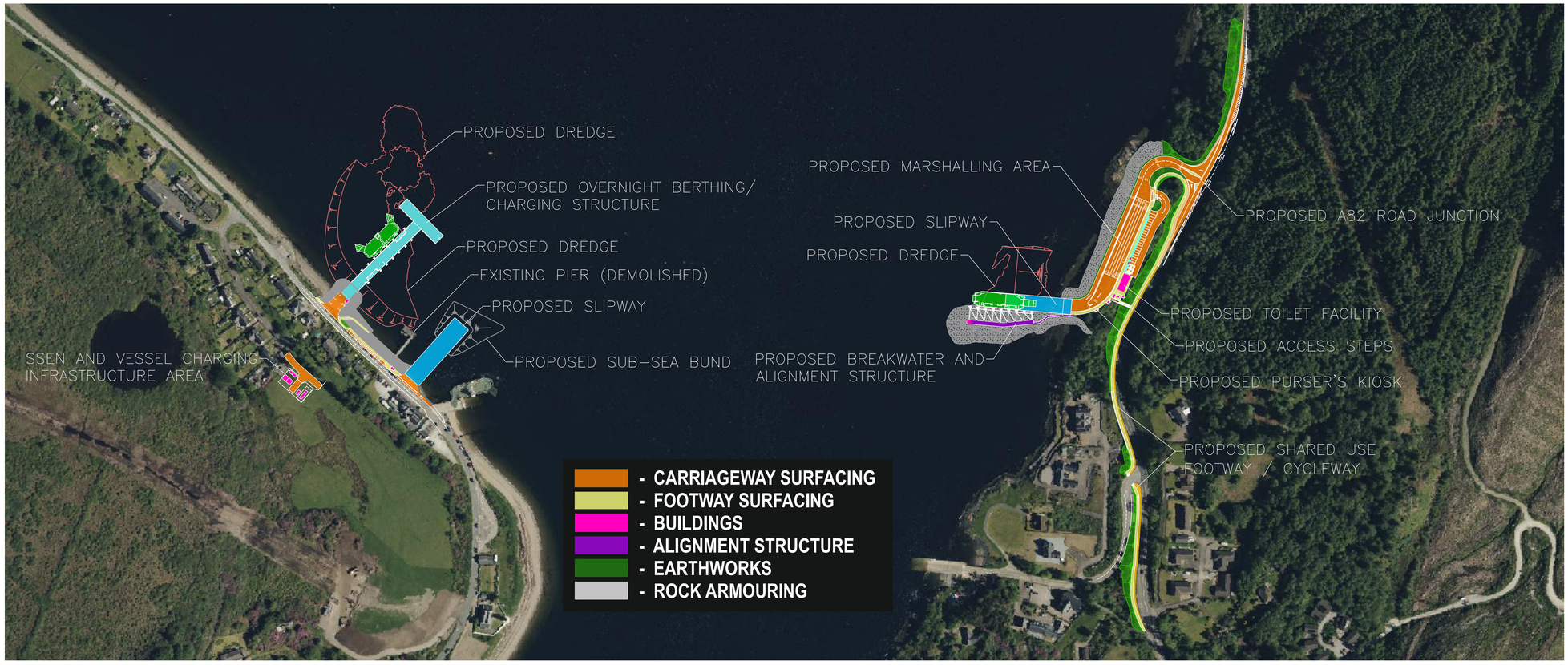
Corran Ferry Infrastructure Improvement Scheme

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Proposed Scheme Design



How Does the Scheme Meet the Design Objectives?

- Overnight berthing structure, breakwater and alignment structure will improve ferry operating conditions and provide safe crew access, increasing the operational window for ferry service during bad weather and therefore minimising the occurrence of service disruption.
- Overnight berthing structure will provide charging for the new electric vessel.
- New marshalling and a new access junction on the Nether Lochaber side will improve traffic flow, preventing the back up of traffic onto the A82 and provide for increasing demand.
- New parking, shared used path and public facilities on the Nether Lochaber side will improve public amenity and maintain active travel links.
- New slipways will allow for straight through Ro-Ro vessels, allowing for increased interchangeability with other vessels, if required.
- Existing slipways will be retained as a contingency, providing further resilience to the service and ensuring minimum disruption to the existing ferry service during construction.

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Ardgour Scheme Infrastructure

Subsea Transmission Cables
Partial removal of two de-energised transmission cables on the seabed will be complete to make way for construction works.

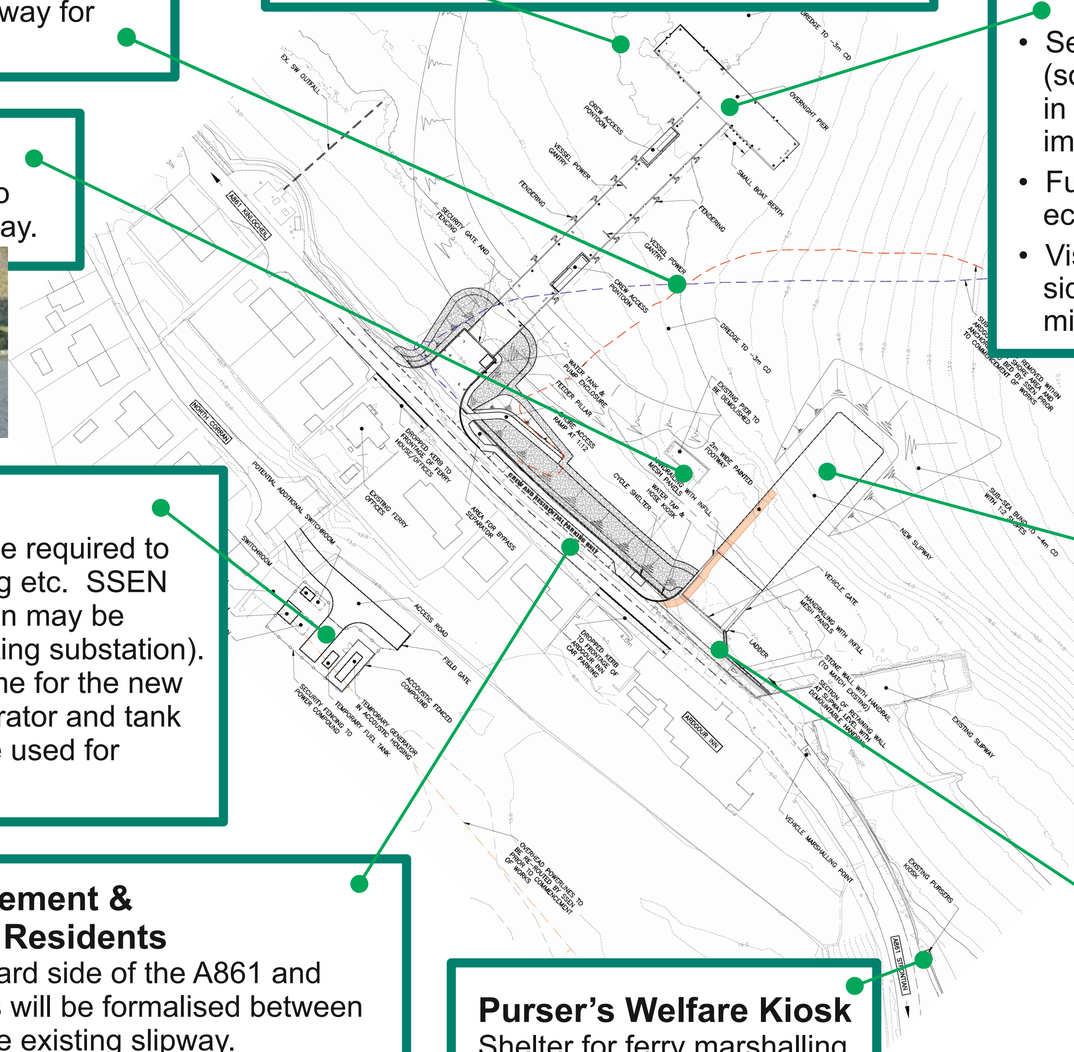
Dredging
Dredging of sands and gravels will be required to create safe water depths for vessels at the overnight berthing structure.

Overnight Berthing Structure
Provides charging infrastructure and berths for the new electric vessel and *MV Corran*. Factors affecting design and location:

- Seabed constraints: construction on steep seabed slopes (south-east) considerably increases costs. Construction in shallower waters (north-west) requires a larger dredge, impacting more of the seabed and increasing costs.
- Funding constraints: a shorter T-head structure is more economic than a longer structure.
- Visual impacts: design will be as low lying as possible with side by side vessel berthing sited in front of the ferry office to minimise visual impacts to other residents as far as practicable.

Demolition of Ardgour Pier
The disused pier will be removed to enable vessel use of the new slipway.





Slipway
A new slipway to accommodate straight through Ro-Ro vessels. Factors affecting design and location:

- Must be accessible from the existing marshalling lanes but not impede use of the existing slipway.
- Visual and noise: Sited close to the existing slipway and marshalling area to minimise changes in visual or noise impacts as far as practicable.
- South east of the existing slipway, steep seabed slopes and strong currents are unfavourable to service resilience.

Substation & Services
The installation of electric services will be required to allow for electric vessel charging, lighting etc. SSEN have advised at least one new substation may be required (to be installed next to the existing substation). If a grid connection is not available in time for the new electric vessel, a temporary diesel generator and tank (both in appropriate containment) will be used for vessel charging in the interim.

Localised Road Improvement & Formalised Parking for Residents
Parking spaces on the seaward side of the A861 and localised road improvements will be formalised between the berthing structure and the existing slipway.

Purser's Welfare Kiosk
Shelter for ferry marshalling staff will be provided in the form of a small kiosk near the marshalling lanes.

Slipway Access
The marshalling lane will be extended to provide access to the new slipway.

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Nether Lochaber Infrastructure

Slipway
A new slipway is proposed to accommodate straight through Ro-Ro vessels, including the new electric vessel.

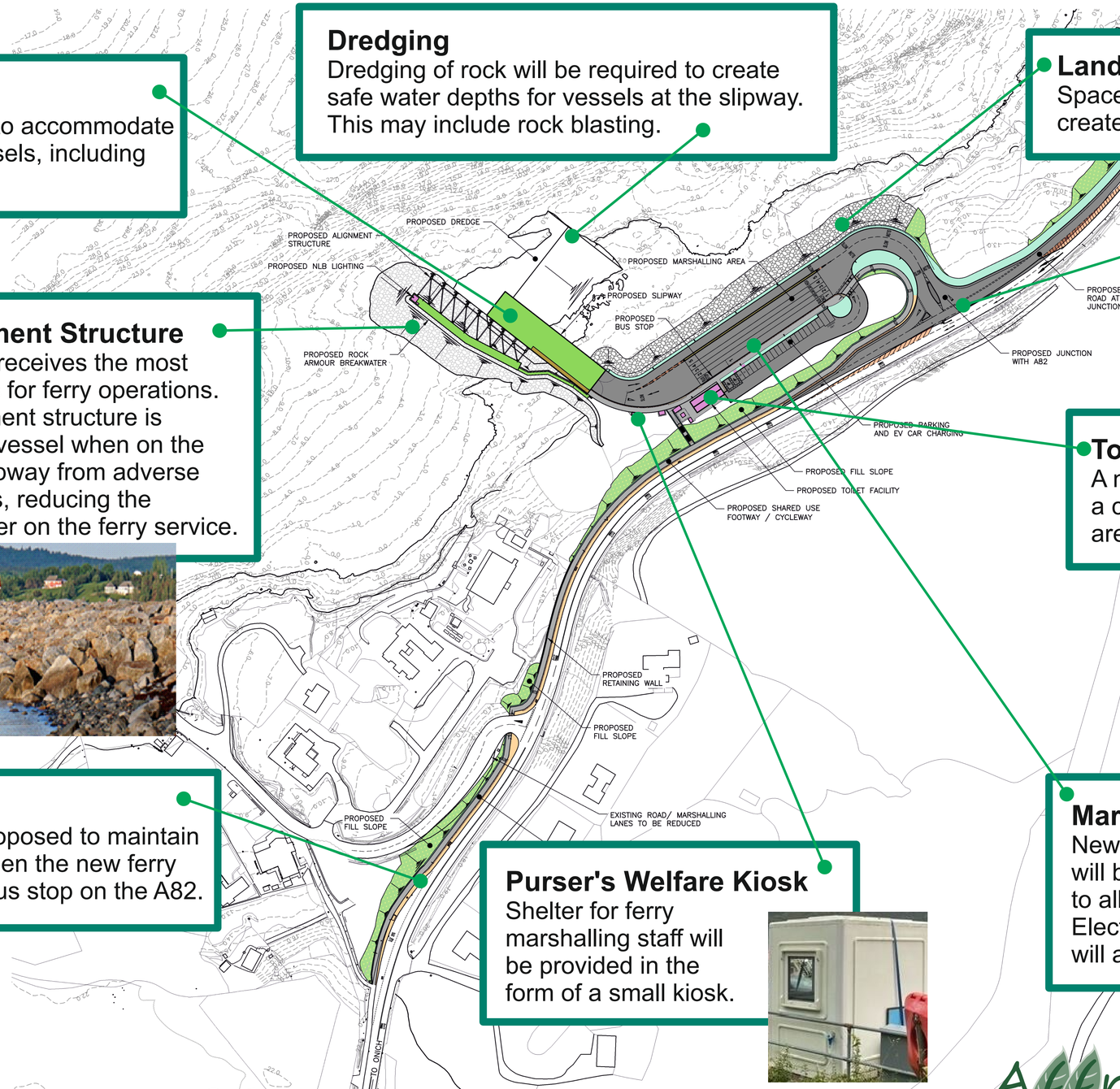
Dredging
Dredging of rock will be required to create safe water depths for vessels at the slipway. This may include rock blasting.

Land Reclamation
Space for the marshalling area will be created by reclaiming land from the sea.

New Junction
A new junction on the A82 trunk road will provide safer access to and from the ferry infrastructure and for through traffic.

Breakwater & Alignment Structure
This side of the narrows receives the most challenging tidal currents for ferry operations. A breakwater with alignment structure is proposed to support the vessel when on the slipway, to shelter the slipway from adverse wave and tidal conditions, reducing the impact of adverse weather on the ferry service.





Toilet Facilities & Cycle Shelter
A new toilet block with changing place facility, and a cycle shelter is proposed for the new marshalling area. The existing facility will be retained.


Existing Toilet facility at Corran

Shared Use Path
A shared use path is proposed to maintain active travel links between the new ferry infrastructure and the bus stop on the A82.

Purser's Welfare Kiosk
Shelter for ferry marshalling staff will be provided in the form of a small kiosk.

Marshalling Area & Parking
New marshalling lanes and parking will be provided at the new slipway to allow for increased ferry demand. Electric vehicle charging facilities will also be provided.

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Consultation Process

Background: Project Concept

- The proposal to invest in a new electric vessel and infrastructure was approved by The Highland Council Full Committee in November 2022.
- The Full Committee is made up of elected local Councillors representing public interest.

Purpose of the Consultation Process

- Pre-application consultation (PAC) is a process required as part of planning permission and marine licence consent applications.
- Consultation is therefore tailored to activities requiring these consents, primarily construction activities and operations associated with the ferry infrastructure.
- Where practicable, comments from consultation may be incorporated into the proposal.



The Consultation Process

- Three rounds of consultation have been undertaken:

Round 1 Nov - Dec 2022 → **Round 2** June 2024 → **Round 3** Sept 2024

- **Feedback from Rounds 1 and 2:** Respondents queried the locations of consultation events and requested more engagement with communities on the peninsula west of the Corran Narrows.
- **Response:** Potential impacts from the new infrastructure will be primarily felt in the settlements of Ardgour and Corran. Hence, consultation events have been predominantly held at Clovullin (near Ardgour) and Fort William (near Corran).
- However, it is acknowledged that as well as Ardgour, the other peninsula communities of Sunart, Ardnamurchan, Morvern, Acharacle and the Isle of Mull have an integral relationship and dependence on the Corran Ferry service. Subsequently, the proposal has developed to ensure:
    - Construction will not result in any disruption to the ferry service; and
    - The proposal will facilitate a more reliable service in the future.
- As attendance at consultation events may not be possible or convenient for all, consultation materials and an opportunity to provide comments on the proposal has been made available online via resources on the consultation website throughout the consultation process.
- A summary of the consultation process and project responses to comments will be presented in a PAC Report in the consent application submissions.

Why Not a Fixed Link?

Feedback

Many respondents commented with their preference for a fixed link (bridge or tunnel) over ferry infrastructure improvements.
Conversely, other respondents raised their preference for maintaining a ferry connection to retain the character of the peninsula and reduce the stresses on existing roads and services.

Response

- The Highland Council recognise there is an appetite from many in the community for a fixed link.
- A fixed link across the Corran Narrows was not adopted into the Scottish Government's Strategic Transport priorities in 2022.
- Without a credible funding option or viable delivery plan for a fixed link, focus was directed into upgrading the ferry service as the most feasible and deliverable option for improving the transport link in the short to medium term.
- The Corran Ferry Infrastructure Improvement Scheme was approved by The Highland Council Full Committee in November 2022.
- The scheme will not preclude the option of a fixed link across the Corran Narrows in future as it does not conflict with any land that may be required in future for a fixed link.

New Ferry and Infrasructure Upgrade

2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024
August On the basis that any fixed link crossing was highly unlikely to be completed within the remaining life of the existing ferries, Highland Council members approve the undertaking of an options appraisal for crossings at Corran Narrows. The scope was to identify pros and cons of different ferry & infrastructure scenarios that meet Transport Planning Objectives and would ensure a sustainable and resilient Corran Ferry Service in the **short-medium term.**	**November** Options appraisal completed. This identified a short-list of ferry & infrastructure options for further consideration. Highland Council members approve further exploration of new ferries & infrastructure options, (including discussions with Transport Scotland) to develop an Outline Business Case (OBC) for the preferred ferry & infrastructure option.	**August** Corran Ferry Steering Group established. **Aug - Nov** OBC updates provided to Lochaber Council members. **December** Market Testing – option of a private ferry operator running the service is ruled out.	**July** Highland Council members give approval to approach Transport Scotland regarding the transfer of responsibility for the Corran Ferry service. Transport Scotland respond that they will require confirmation on the Council's plans to fund new ferry(s) and any supporting infrastructure prior to discussing any transfer of responsibility. Transport Scotland instead offers support in kind for design of the new vessel(s) through the Caledonian Maritime Assets Ltd (CMAL) Small Vessel Replacement Programme (SVRP) 2020.	**June** Funding for ***the design & consenting*** of replacement Electric Vessels & infrastructure is approved by the full Highland Council. Design work commences: Vessels to be designed as part of the SVRP. Infrastructure design commissioned to Wallace Stone.	**November** Highland Council members approve the Outline Business Case to seek investment in electric ferries and infrastructure. **November/ December** Round 1 of pre-application public consultation events for the infrastructure scheme take place in Ardgour, Fort William and Strontian.	**May** Full Council approves the submission of £50 million Levelling Up Fund (LUF) bid for a new ferry and infrastructure. **November** LUF bid unsuccessful. **November** Project receives reallocation of £20 million from City Region Deal (UK Government) to fund essential infrastructure.	**March** Full Council approves £10 million funding to top up the UK Government's £20 million investment in ferry infrastructure. **May** Highland Council makes request to the Scottish Government to repurpose monies from the Inverness and Highland City Region Deal to fund a new electric ferry for Corran. **June** Round 2 of public consultation events for the infrastructure scheme to take place.

Fixed Link

2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024
August Highland Council officers meet with Highland and Islands Transport Partnership (HITRANS) to scope a **longer-term** Options Appraisal/Feasibility Study (including the option of a fixed link).			**April** Fixed Link Feasibility Study is presented to the Highland Council, HITRANS and Highland and Islands Enterprise. This is then submitted to Transport Scotland for consideration within the Strategic Transport Projects Review 2 (STPR2) which outlines national transport project priorities for 2022-2042.		**January** A fixed link at Corran is rejected as a project to take forward in STPR2. **April** Highland Council responds to the STPR2, surprised that a Fixed link at Corran is not part of the plan. **September** Transport Minister confirms STPR2 is restricted to proposals for Scottish Government-owned assets only.		**February** Start of public consultation for the Islands Connectivity Plan (ICP). Appraisals for fixed link in the ICP proposals do not include Corran. **May** Council responds to the ICP to ensure that the proposed Mull Fixed Link work includes the potential to consider the longer-term fixed link **options for Corran.**

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Landscape and Visual Impacts

Feedback

Respondents raised concerns that the new infrastructure would impact their views and affect property values.

Response - Nether Lochaber

- Nether Lochaber infrastructure is sited to the north of Corran, avoiding any visual obstruction to Corran properties.
- Woodland is proposed between the new carpark and the A82, creating a visual screen between the trunk road and the new infrastructure.

Response - Ardgour

- Overnight berthing structure is sited in front of the Ferry Office to minimise visual impacts to other residents as far as practicable.
- The structure cannot be sited further north-west, due to the fish farm lease area, or south-east, due to seabed slopes and tidal conditions.
- Overnight berthing structure will be as low lying as possible.
- Only essential tall fittings will be installed (e.g. charging gantries, lighting columns).
- Where practicable, other components (i.e. power infrastructure) have been sited in the field behind Ardgour or the Ferry Office garden to reduce the infrastructure required required on the berthing structure or shorefront, thereby minimising visual impacts.



Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment

- The significance of any visual changes and landscape impacts resulting from the scheme design will be assessed in the Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) currently underway.
- Proposed viewpoints for photomontages are shown by a ★ on the map above.
- Photomontages are available depicting the proposed scheme in the context of the landscape and will be included within the EIA.

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Noise Impact Assessment



Noise Survey and Assessment

- Baseline noise monitoring was undertaken in August 2024 at the locations shown above.
- Construction and operational noise will be modelled as part of the EIA to assess potential impacts.
- The EIA will also identify mitigation measures to further reduce noise nuisance where practicable.

Feedback

Respondents raised concerns about noise from construction and operations, particularly for the residents and businesses in Ardgour.

Response - Ardgour

- New slipway is sited close to the existing slipway.
- This was determined to be the best practicable location (in consideration of site engineering constraints) to minimise noise and visual impacts on Ardgour residents and businesses.
- The marshalling front will remain in its existing location, in order to minimise change to noise from marshalling activities.

Response - Nether Lochaber

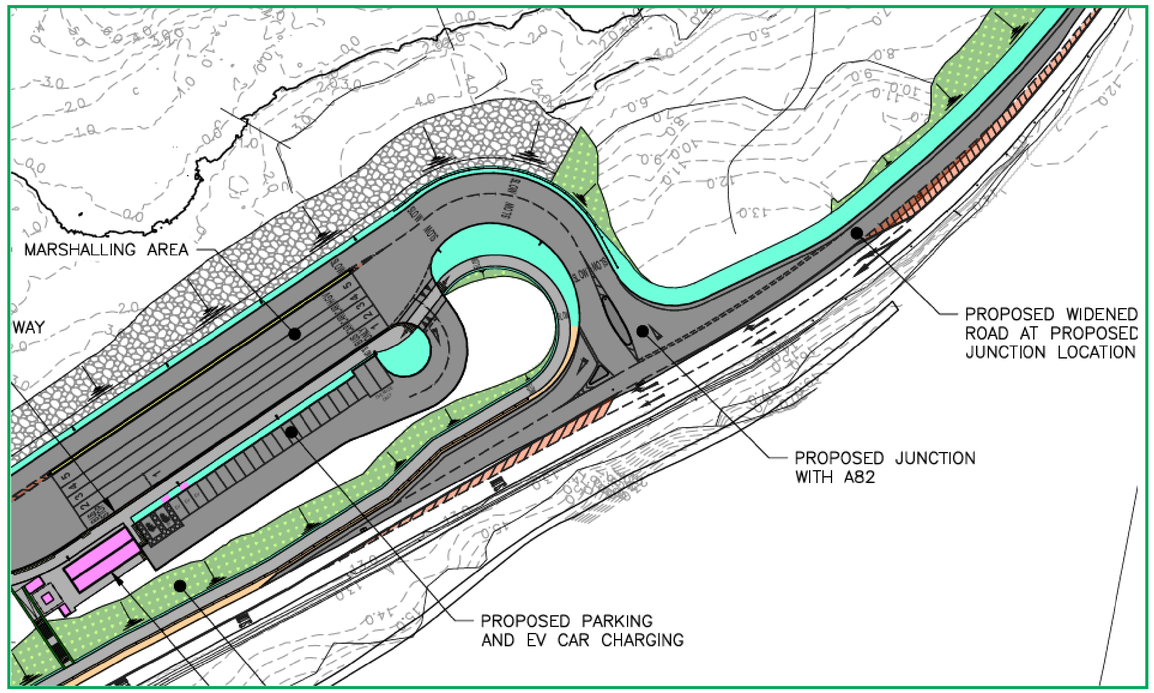
- Infrastructure is sited to the north, away from residential properties, reducing traffic and associated noise to Corran residents and businesses.



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Traffic Impact Assessment



Traffic and Transport Impact Assessment

- Traffic surveys have been carried out to inform modelling of traffic at the new junction, road and marshalling area.
- The EIA will consider the temporary increase in traffic during construction.
- The EIA will also assess traffic impacts in the operational phase, in consideration of a projected increase in ferry demand.

Road Junction Safety

Feedback

Many respondents commented that the existing junction with the A82 at Corran is a safety hazard.

Response

- A new junction with the A82, including deceleration lanes and a ghost island will considerably improve traffic flow and sights lines.
- The new marshalling area on the Nether Lochaber side will have increased capacity, greatly reducing the risk of queuing traffic backing up onto the A82..

Marshalling

Feedback

- Respondents shared concerns about inadequate capacity in marshalling areas on both sides of the Narrows in Round 1. This was addressed in the designs for the Nether Lochaber side presented in Round 2. The concerns remained for Ardgour.

Response

- It remains a goal to extend the Ardgour marshalling area in Phase 2 of the project.
- However, due to limited funding, extension to the Ardgour marshalling area is not included within the current proposed works package.
- The safety risks on the A82 were prioritised due to higher volumes of traffic travelling at greater speeds.
- The provision of a Purser's Kiosk at Ardgour will help to facilitate a more proactive on-the- ground management of the existing marshalling capacity, particularly during peak periods.

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Active Travel and Parking

Active Travel Connections

Feedback

Respondents called for the designs to facilitate active travel and consider travel networks (i.e., infrastructure for pedestrians and cyclists and to provide adequate connections to bus routes).

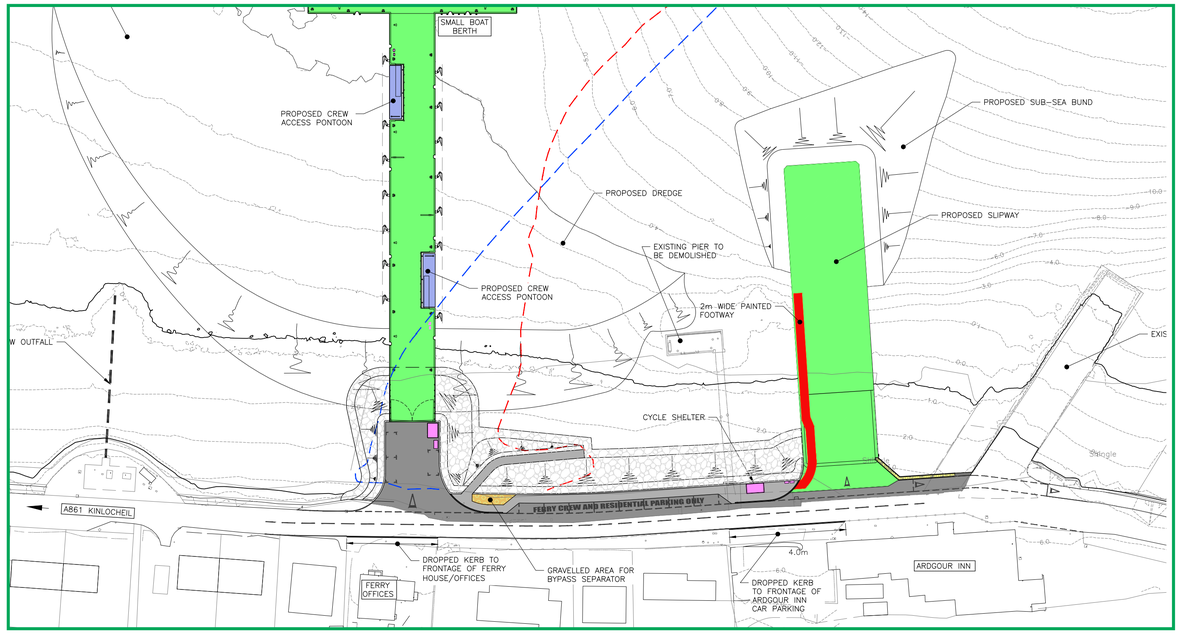
Response - Nether Lochaber

- A fit-for-purpose shared-use path will connect the new ferry infrastructure to the bus stop on the A82 (introducing an appropriate gradient for wheeler access).
- A stairway is included to provide a shorter route.
- The shared-use path will have appropriate lighting.
- A new cycle shelter is sited adjacent to the carpark.
- Relocated local bus stop and designated lane for bus priority within the marshalling area.

Response - Ardgour

- Footpath and handrail improvements in front of the Inn at Ardgour to segregate pedestrians and road traffic.





Parking

Feedback

Respondents commented on the need for additional parking on both sides of the Narrows.

Response - Nether Lochaber

- A new public car park with a total of 24 parking spaces is included in the infrastructure design on the Nether Lochaber side.

Response - Ardgour

- It remains a goal to introduce public parking in the extended marshalling area at Ardgour as part of Phase 2 of the project. However, this is not included within the funding of the current proposed works package.
- Formalisation of resident and ferry crew parking on the Ardgour shorefront is intended to improve resident access and traffic flow through the settlement.

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Ecological Impact Assessment

Environmental Concerns

Feedback

Respondents raised concerns about the potential for impacts on local wildlife and habitats.

Response

- The following assessments are being undertaken as part of the Ecological Impact Assessment, to be presented as part of the EIA Report.
- The EIA will identify mitigation to minimise any adverse impacts.
- In alignment with national planning policy, biodiversity enhancement will be undertaken to conserve, restore and enhance biodiversity, including nature networks so they are in a demonstrably better state than without intervention.



Woodland

The woodland to be removed north of Corran is recognised as a valuable habitat.

A planting plan will be developed to compensate for the woodland removal required for the proposal.



Marine Ecology / Underwater Noise Survey

Underwater noise modelling is underway to understand the impact of the construction works on marine mammals and fish, to inform the mitigation design.

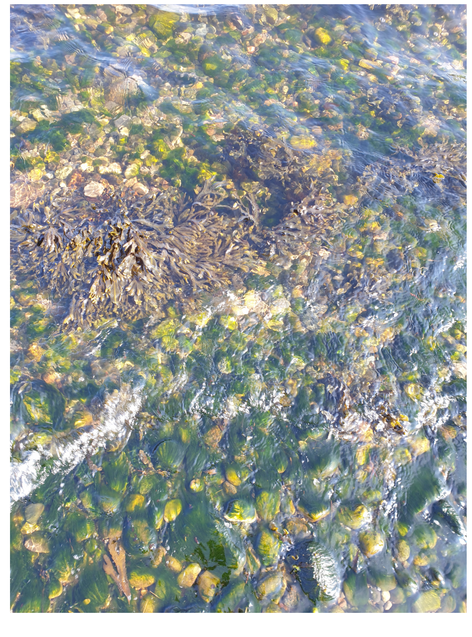
Terrestrial Species

Protected species surveys identified that the woodland north of Corran is likely home to species including bats, birds and bluebells. Otters are also known to use this woodland and the foreshore on both sides of the Corran Narrows. Ongoing surveys are informing the assessment of potential effects on these species, including disturbance and habitat change.



Benthic Habitats & Ecology

A benthic survey was completed in November 2023, which identified various habitats, including kelp habitats which are priority marine features. Consideration will also be given to a seagrass bed ~1km north of the proposal. Mapping of seabed habitats is being undertaken to understand potential effects associated with the development footprint and dredging.



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Further Impact Assessments

The following assessments are also in plan or underway as part of the EIA.

Local Businesses

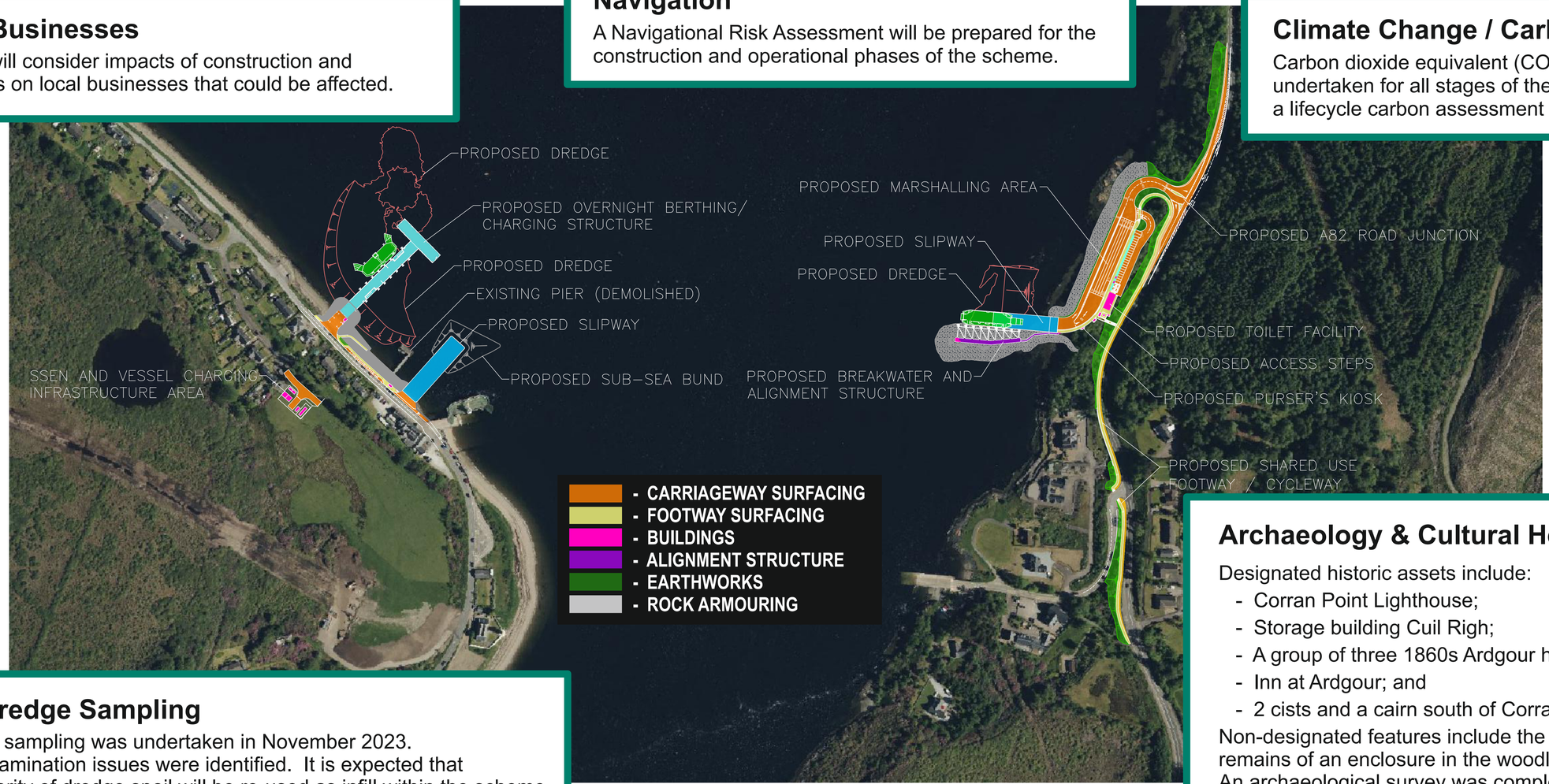
The EIA will consider impacts of construction and operations on local businesses that could be affected.

Navigation

A Navigational Risk Assessment will be prepared for the construction and operational phases of the scheme.

Climate Change / Carbon Calculations

Carbon dioxide equivalent (CO_2e) calculations will be undertaken for all stages of the development, to allow a lifecycle carbon assessment to be undertaken.



Pre-dredge Sampling

Seabed sampling was undertaken in November 2023.
No contamination issues were identified. It is expected that the majority of dredge spoil will be re-used as infill within the scheme.

Archaeology & Cultural Heritage

Designated historic assets include:

- Corran Point Lighthouse;
- Storage building Cuil Righ;
- A group of three 1860s Ardgour houses;
- Inn at Ardgour; and
- 2 cists and a cairn south of Corran.

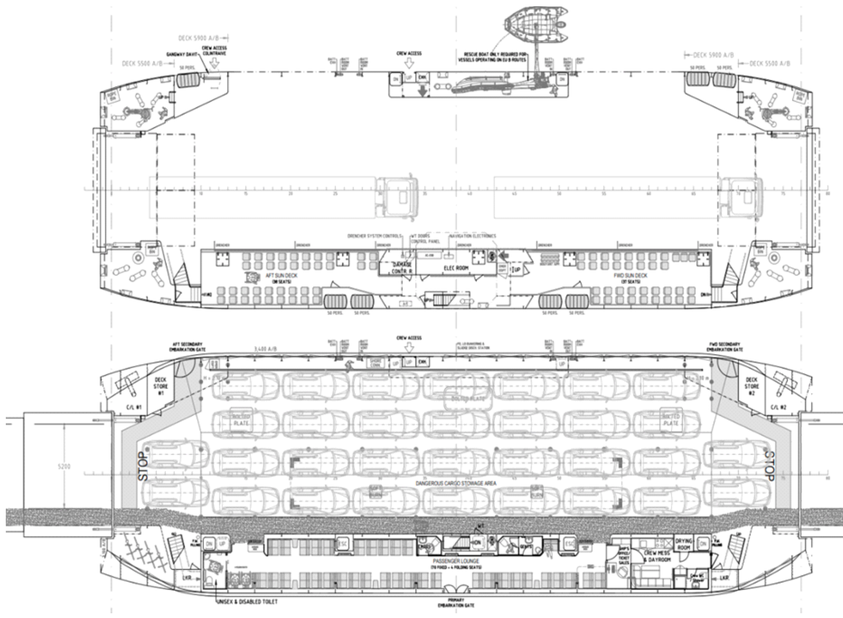
Non-designated features include the existing slipways and remains of an enclosure in the woodland north of Corran. An archaeological survey was completed in June 2024 to inform the assessment on historic features in the area, both on the seabed and on land.

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Vessel

- A New Electric Vessel is proposed to operate as the primary vessel in service.
- The Highland Council are working with Caledonian Maritime Assets Ltd (CMAL) to procure a new vessel.
- The design for a new electric ferry, specifically for the Corran service, is now complete.
- The new vessel will take 32 cars, 4 more than the *MV Corran*.
- Electric powered vessel technology will minimise operational carbon emissions in line with Highland Council policies and the Scottish Government's commitment of achieving net zero by 2045.
- The vessel will have an onboard diesel generator as a contingency in the event of grid power disruption.
- The new ferry is expected to be brought into service in 2028, subject to funding approval.
- An upgrade to the electricity grid is required by Scottish and Southern Electricity Networks (SSEN) to provide enough power to charge the electric vessel. If a grid connection is not available in time for the new electric vessel, a temporary diesel generator and tank (both in appropriate containment) will be used for vessel charging in the interim.
- The *MV Corran* will be modified to fit the new slipways and retained as the relief vessel.



Passenger Sun Deck
78 seats

Main Deck
32 cars or
16 cars + 2 Heavy Good Vehicles
72 seats
Bicycle storage



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Why an Electric Vessel?

Feedback
There have been mixed responses on the introduction of an electric vessel and their environmental credentials. Many respondents queried the use of electric-powered technology compared to existing diesel-powered vessels.

The Background
Human activities have disrupted the climate. To minimise the severity of consequences, we need changes quickly on a global scale. Co-ordinated action is being taken by countries across the world. The Scottish Government has a target of net zero emissions by 2045. The strategy involves a transition to renewable energy and reducing the use of fossil fuels in sectors such as energy and transport.

Noise Reduction: Electric vessels operate much quieter than diesel-powered vessels, creating a more pleasant experience for passengers and reducing disturbance for marine wildlife and coastal communities.

Energy Transition: Electric vessels can be powered by renewable energy sources such as wind, solar or hydroelectric power. This facilitates transition to sustainable energy sources and reduces dependency on fossil fuels, enhancing energy security.

Government Targets and Policy

- **The Climate Change (Emissions Reduction Targets) (Scotland) Act 2019** emphasises the necessity to reduce emissions. In line with this, the Scottish Government introduced a target of net-zero emissions by 2045.
- **National Planning Framework 4 - Policy 1** – *'When considering all development proposals significant weight will be given to the global climate and nature crises. Intent: To encourage, promote and facilitate development that minimises emissions and adapts to the current and future impacts of climate change'.*
- **National Marine Plan - General Planning Principle 5: Climate Change** – *'Marine planners and decision makers must act in the way best calculated to mitigate, and adapt to, climate change. Marine planners and decision makers should seek to facilitate a transition to a low carbon economy... This will be of particular relevance in cases of large-scale development and infrastructure projects'.*
- **Highland wide Local Development Plan – Policy 28** – *'The Council will support developments which promote and enhance the social, economic and environmental wellbeing of the people of Highland'.*

In Practice

- Funding is only available for projects aligned with relevant policies.
- In response to the above, CMAL's Small Vessels Replacement Programme evaluated options for low emission ferries and have selected electric power as their preferred option for short ferry crossings.
- An electric vessel will use energy from the national grid, which will become more renewables-fuelled in the coming years.
- There is no mechanism for The Highland Council to fund a new diesel vessel within the current policy framework.



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Where Do We Go From Here?

Nov 2022 → Nov 2024

Collation of Public and Stakeholder Feedback

A detailed report of comments received from pre-application consultation (PAC), and how these have been considered in the proposal will be prepared (called a PAC report).

2022 → Dec 2024

Design Development

Finer details on infrastructure designs will be finalised.

June → Dec 2024

Environmental Impact Assessment

The detailed design and construction methodologies will be subject to EIA.

The EIA will be informed by further surveys and studies taking place throughout 2024.

Jan 2025

Planning Permission and Marine Licence Applications

Applications include:

- Design information.
- Environmental Impact Assessment Report.
- PAC Report.
- Habitat Enhancement Plan.
- Other supporting documentation.

Feb 2025

Consultation Period Opens

Submissions will be made publicly available by the Highland Council Planning Authority and the Marine Directorate.

Planning Permission and Marine Licence Granted

(subject to consenting authority determination)

Secondary Licensing

e.g. protected species licences

Consent Condition Close Out

Construction Tender

Aug 2025 → Feb 2027

Construction Phase

See next poster for more information

2027 Onwards →

Operations Phase

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The Construction Phase

Construction Works

- Construction is scheduled to start in August 2025.
- Construction is expected be complete in February 2027.

Communication

- Updates on the project and information on any changes to service operations (e.g. timetables) will be communicated on the Highland Council's Corran Ferry website **https://www.highland.gov.uk/corranferry** and social media platforms.
- A dedicated Community Liaison Officer will be in place as a point of contact between local communities and the construction contractor and Highland Council.

Transition to the New Infrastructure

- The *MV Corran* will be modified to fit the new slipways.
- Transition to the new infrastructure will be carefully managed to minimise risk of disruption to the ferry service.
- Upon delivery, the new electric vessel will be introduced into service, with the *MV Corran* retained to act as the relief vessel.

Have your say!

Do you have any questions, thoughts or suggestions to share?

Scan the QR Code



Please Note
Representations made to the Highland Council or Affric Limited are not representations to Scottish Ministers or Highland Council Planning. There will be opportunity for representations to be made to these consenting authorities once planning and marine licence applications have been submitted.

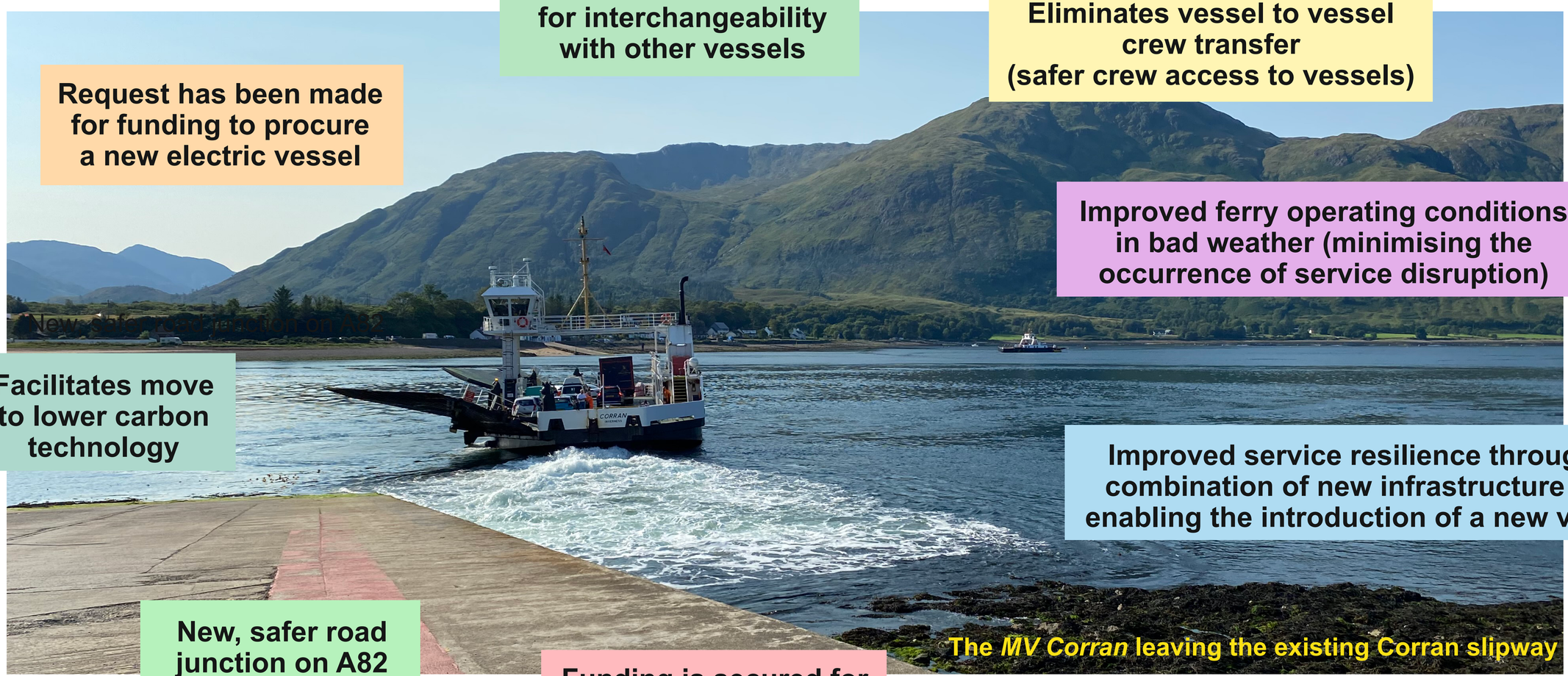
Corran Ferry
Infrastructure Improvement Scheme

Affric

Wallace Stone
Consulting Civil Engineers

The Highland Council
Comhairle na Gàidhealtachd

Proposal in Summary



Corran Ferry
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