



National Developments – Response Form

Please use the table below to let us know about projects you think may be suitable for national development status. You can also tell us your views on the existing national developments in National Planning Framework 3, referencing their name and number, and providing reasons as to why they should maintain their status. Please use a separate table for each project or development. **Please fill in a [Respondent Information Form](#) and return it with this form to scotplan@gov.scot.**

Name of proposed national development	Strategic Ferry Ports and Roads
Brief description of proposed national development	<p>Maintaining and enhancing the strategic transport corridors – road and sea – which serve the Outer Hebrides and deliver lifeline services to, and within, the islands. Without effective lifeline routes to key destinations within and beyond the islands, communities become cut off.</p> <p>This investment would maximise freight, cruise ship and other economic potential, as well as ensuring future-proofing for the primary ferry function and for emerging low carbon fuels and technologies. In respect of the ferry capacity, investment in infrastructure at these Ports would allow more flexible deployment of vessels across the network in order to respond to demand.</p>
Location of proposed national development (information in a GIS format is welcome if available)	Main Ferry Ports in the Outer Hebrides and west coast of Scotland, and Strategic Trunk Roads serving these gateway ferry ports, the Outer Hebrides and the inter-island Spinal Route. Within the Outer Hebrides this would include ports at Lochboisdale and Castlebay, and Mallaig, Oban and Uig on the Mainland and Skye. The roads include the spinal route within the Outer Hebrides and the following mainland routes: A82, A85 A87, A9, A835, A830.
What part or parts of the development requires planning permission or other consent?	The project consists of developing transport links to the Outer Hebrides through maintaining and enhancing the main Ferry Ports and Strategic Roads infrastructure. Ports and Roads will be within the remit of Harbour Authorities, the Scottish Government or Local Authorities and Harbour and Roads Authority consenting apply.
When would the development	An ongoing, rolling programme of maintenance

<p>be complete or operational?</p>	<p>and improvement to safeguard strategic transport corridors and ensure lifeline services to the islands are maintained.</p>
<p>Is the development already formally recognised – for example identified in a development plan, has planning permission, in receipt of funding etc.</p>	<p>Stornoway and Oban, two of the principal ports delivering lifeline services to the Outer Hebrides are designated as Key Ports in National Planning Framework 3. All strategic Ferry ports are referenced in their respective Development Plans and each represents a ‘Gateway’ locations for goods, services and the visitor economy. The Strategic Roads under consideration have their own designation in Scottish Government policy. The transport corridors under consideration reflect the characteristics and aims of four NPF3 National Developments in the island context: ‘High Speed Rail’; ‘Strategic Airport Enhancement’; ‘Freight Handling Capacity on the Forth’; and, ‘Aberdeen Harbour,’ therefore it must be recognised these lifeline strategic transport corridors (roads/ports) are our equivalent to the above noted four NPF3 national developments.</p> <p>The Outer Hebrides Local Development Plan 2018 sets out a vision and spatial strategy for the development of land in the Outer Hebrides. Under Policy EI 9: Transport Infrastructure the following are identified as priority areas for upgrading and development of the transport infrastructure within, and serving the Outer Hebrides: a) the spinal and inter island routes; b) the airports at Barra, Balivanich and Stornoway; c) ports and harbours, including ferry facilities for mainland and inter island connections.</p>

Contribution of proposed national development to the national development criteria (maximum 500 words):

CLIMATE CHANGE

The Strategic Transport Corridors which serve the Outer Hebrides represent an excellent opportunity to decarbonise Scotland’s road and ferry network. Hydrogen powered ferries, being taken forward by Point & Sandwick Trust and Wood Group’s ‘Scottish Outer Hebrides Ferry Transport Hydrogen’ (SWIFTH2) is scoping the feasibility of Hydrogen for the Stornoway – Ullapool and South Uist – Barra routes, tied to and Outer Hebrides Energy Hub. By embedding Electric Vehicle charging infrastructure in Trunk Roads and the island Spinal Route, the entire journey to the Outer Hebrides could become carbon-free. Hydrogen for freight and Connected and Autonomous Vehicles could, in time, take carbon savings on these island corridors to the next level. Net Zero obligations should be

central to Government investment decisions in Ports and Roads and the routes in question lend themselves to a Zero Carbon 'Road to the (Low Carbon) Isles'.

PEOPLE

The Trunk Road and Outer Hebrides Spinal Route infrastructure underpins the provision of lifeline services (goods, services, healthcare, visitor economy etc.) to all island communities and this network should be supported through NPF4 in the same way as Strategic Airports and High Speed Rail were supported through NPF3. Sustainable communities in the islands depend on well-funded Strategic Transport Corridors and good connectivity leads to good quality of life, and attractiveness for incoming population and investment. With the withdrawal of the Stornoway to Aberdeen air service, the high proportion of Oil & Gas Workers domiciled in the Outer Hebrides are now dependent on the ferry / A832 / A96 transport corridor to get to work.

INCLUSIVE GROWTH

High Speed Rail, the Motorway Network and Strategic Airports are all heavily supported by Government across the UK. The same investment effort should take place with lifeline island links. Investment in these Strategic Transport Corridors will rebalance the UK economy and enable new investment and job creation potential in the Outer Hebrides. Good connectivity supports active communities and social inclusion, reducing journey times, and minimising disruption. Reducing high 'Transport Poverty' in Eilean Siar is a Comhairle objective and this is known to have a particular negative effect on young people (Young People and the Highlands & Islands: Maximising Opportunities, HIE (2018), of whom retention and attraction is sought.

Improved transport connectivity to our islands would be facilitated through this investment which in turn would help tackle island depopulation, impact on economic growth, and deliver inclusive growth outcomes for our communities.

PLACE

The islands are the jewel in the crown of Scottish tourism and the maintenance and enhancement of reliable and regular transport links to and from the islands is of national importance. Good connectivity will drive growth in some of the most fragile communities in the UK. Conversely, poor connectivity caused by weather related road closures, landslips (principally on the A82 with extended diversions when the Rest And Be Thankful is closed), roadworks, weather related ferry cancellation and delays has a significant negative impact on business confidence and on the perceptions of potential visitors and investors. Delays also mean more time away from work and family. Delays in the freight system lead to significant knock-on disruption at island retail outlets with local businesses unable to distribute goods effectively.

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For more information and other resources



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