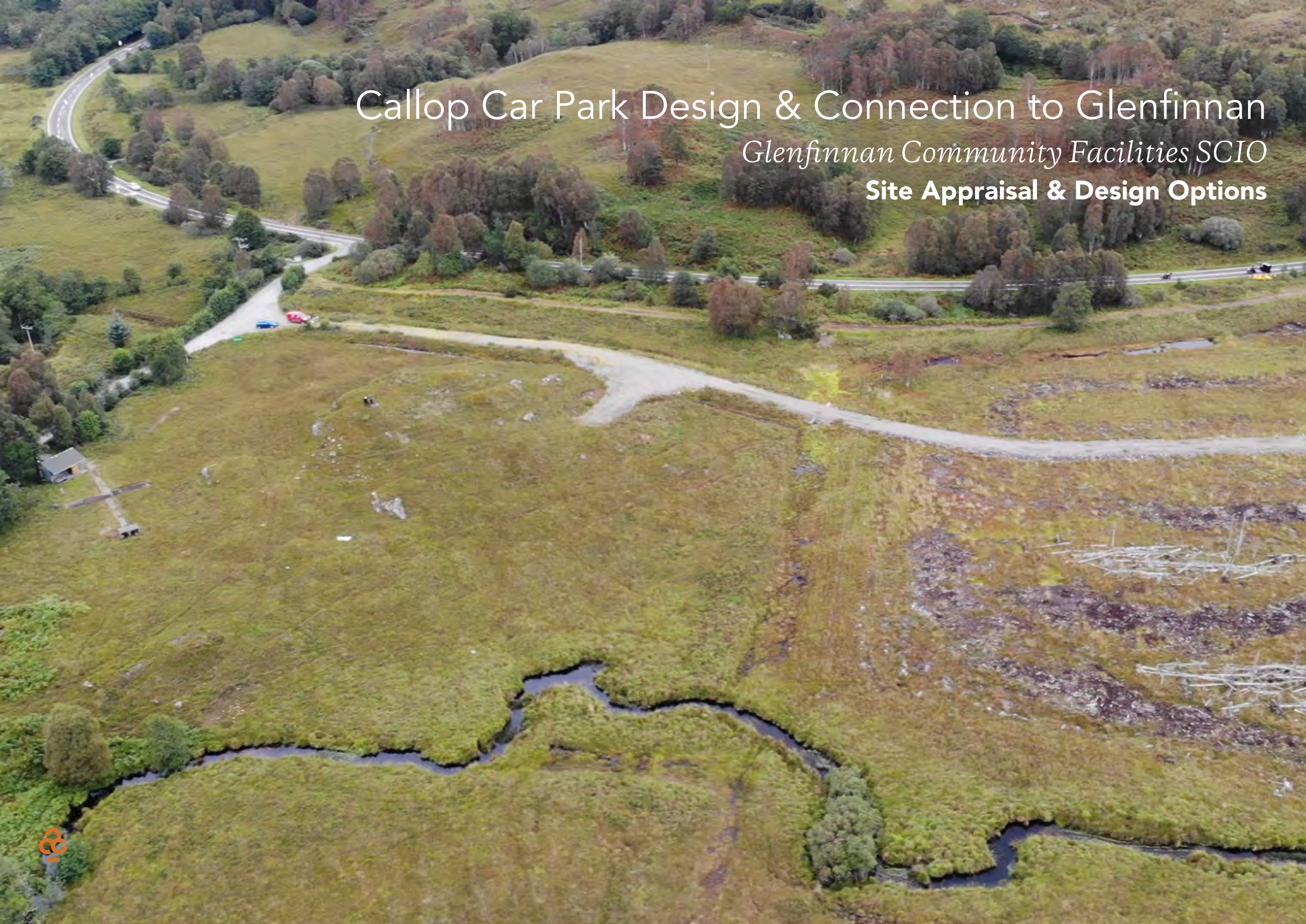


An aerial photograph of a rural landscape. A road curves through the upper left, leading to a junction. A stream flows through the lower half of the image. The terrain is a mix of green fields and autumn-colored trees. A small building is visible on the left side.

Callop Car Park Design & Connection to Glenfinnan

Glenfinnan Community Facilities SCIO
Site Appraisal & Design Options

This report has been prepared by:



Author :	SR
Checked by:	NJB
Date:	11/02/2026
Revision:	A
Reference:	2331/Development at Callop





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Location Plan

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1 Introduction & Scope

Introduction

The overarching purpose of this study is to demonstrate the feasibility of owning and managing land at Callop for community benefit. This includes:

- Assessing the demand requirement for new parking and facilities provision at Area B, Callop approx 1.5 miles southeast of Glenfinnan off of the A830;
- Assess the suitability of Area B to meet the transport needs identified and model options for the site at Callop;
- Identify appropriate interventions in Area A to enable sustainable walking, wheeling and cycling provision from Callop to Glenfinnan and sustainable management of the woodland. A separate active travel greenway study by Sigma consultants between Drumsallie to Glenfinnan passing through Callop has been prepared, with several options for the routes. This will be considered in relation to the Callop layout;
- Prepare indicative drawings for the site and building layouts to meet client needs.

This report focuses on the landscape elements of the project. The architect Rural Design and forestry consultant will be looking at those specific aspects.

The wider team will be: researching options for generating revenue and developing a viable business model to deliver these; assessing the risk associated with community ownership and management of the assets; reviewing funding availability and phased delivery plan; and preparing a 5 year business case.

This proposal is about managing existing pressure; not creating new demand.

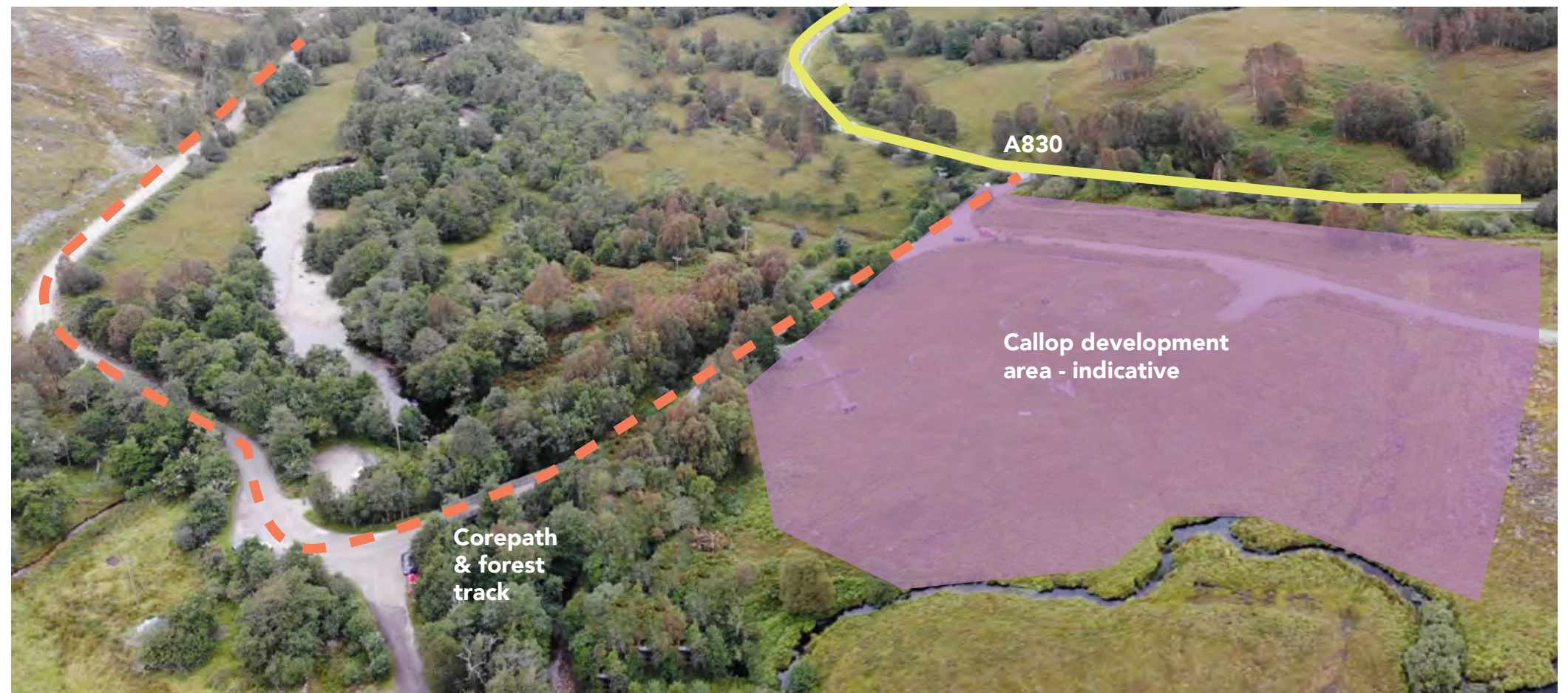
2 Context : Car Park Options Study

Information gathering and establishment of baseline data

The site is approx 1.5 miles southeast of Glenfinnan off the A830 into FLS land which is dominated by peatland. A core path which is also a forest track passes the site and continues west toward Glenfinnan, crossing the River Callop as it passes the site.

Desktop baseline data has been collated for the Callop site including: Topography; Landscape designations; Heritage designations; Geology, Soils and Woodland.

Following a site visit, a series of 3 appraisal diagrams have been prepared that looks at Callop, the corepath / forest track and the area next to the footbridge at Glenfinnan where the boardwalk used to be.



Aerial drone image : credit Mark Normand

3 Desktop Analysis

Topography

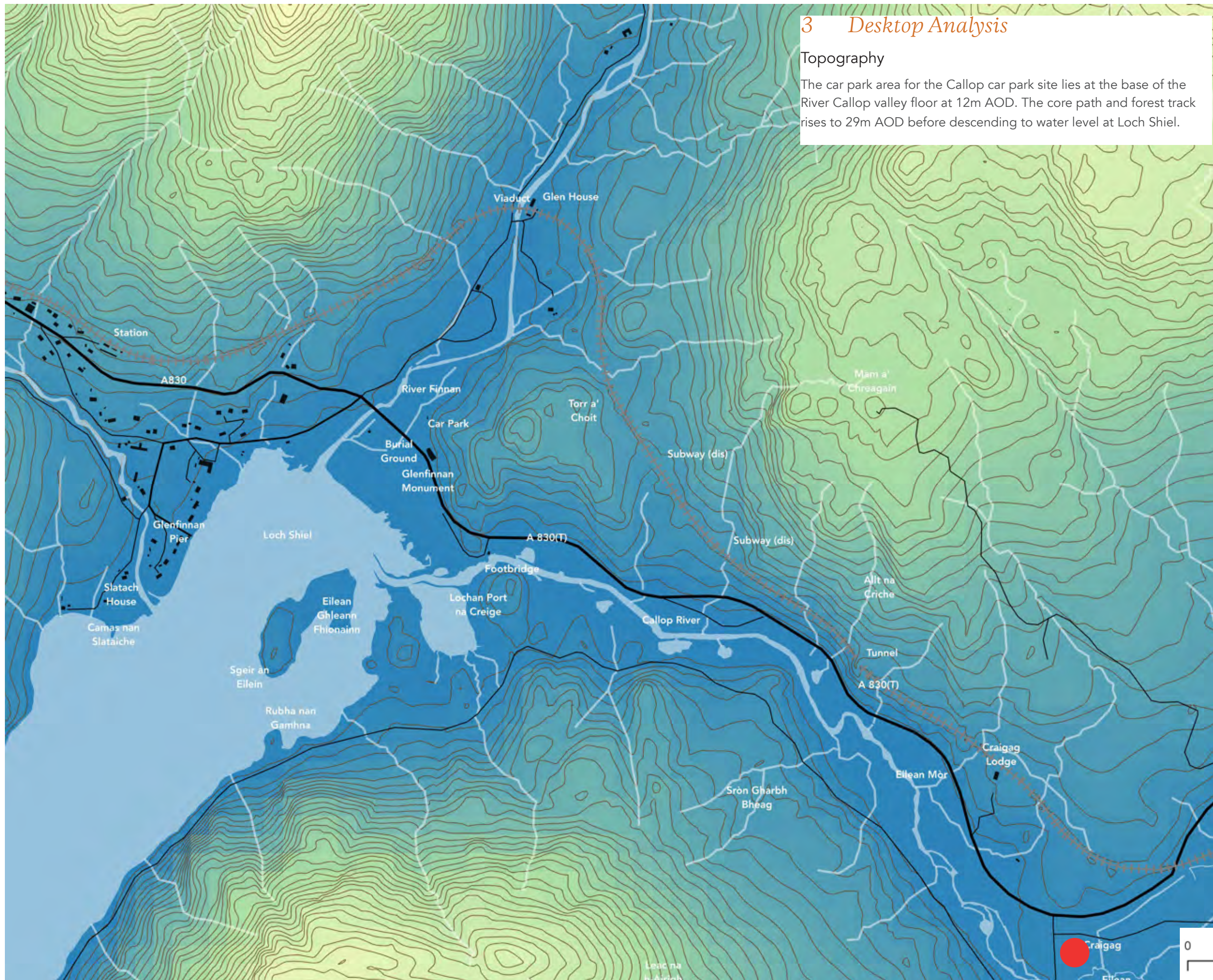
The car park area for the Callop car park site lies at the base of the River Callop valley floor at 12m AOD. The core path and forest track rises to 29m AOD before descending to water level at Loch Shiel.

Topography (1:10,000)

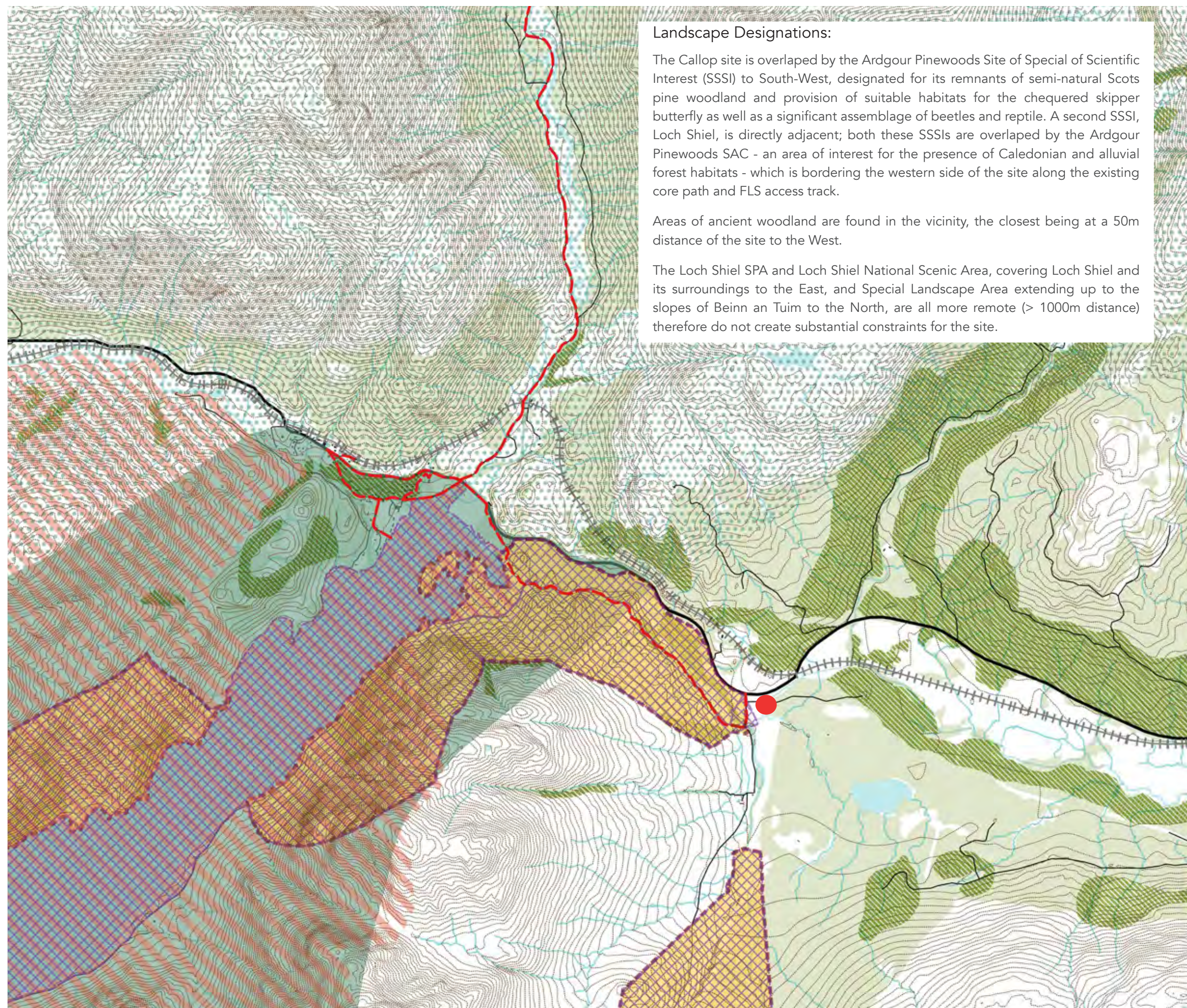
Terrain height (AOD)

800

0



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Landscape Designations (1:25,000)

-  Special Areas of Conservation (SAC)
-  Special Protection Areas (SPA)
-  Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI)
-  Ancient Woodland Inventory
-  National Scenic Areas (Loch Shiel)
-  Special Landscape Areas (Moidart, Morar and Glen Shiel)
-  Core Paths

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0 250 500 750 1,000 1,250 m



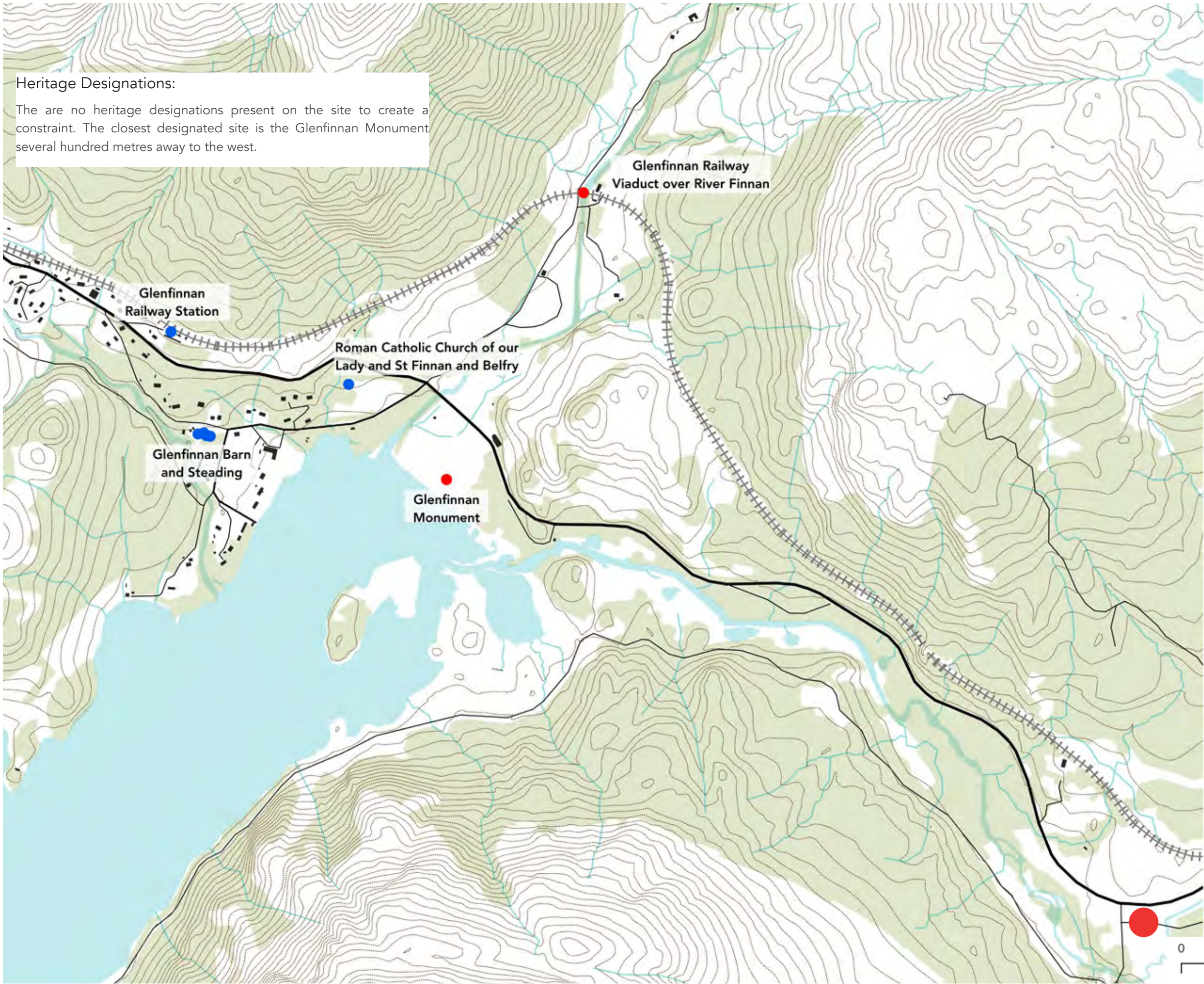
Heritage Designations:

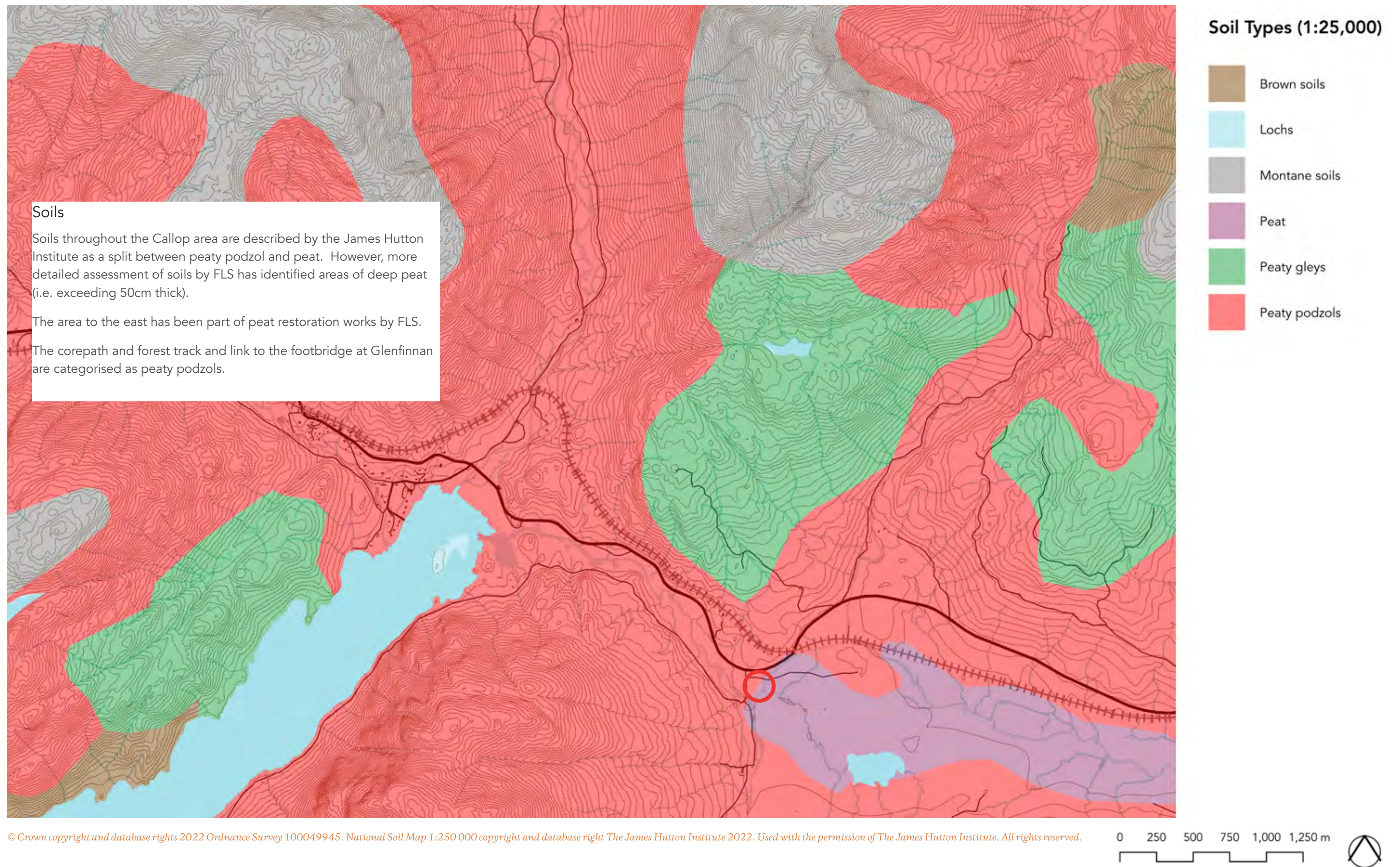
The are no heritage designations present on the site to create a constraint. The closest designated site is the Glenfinnan Monument several hundred metres away to the west.

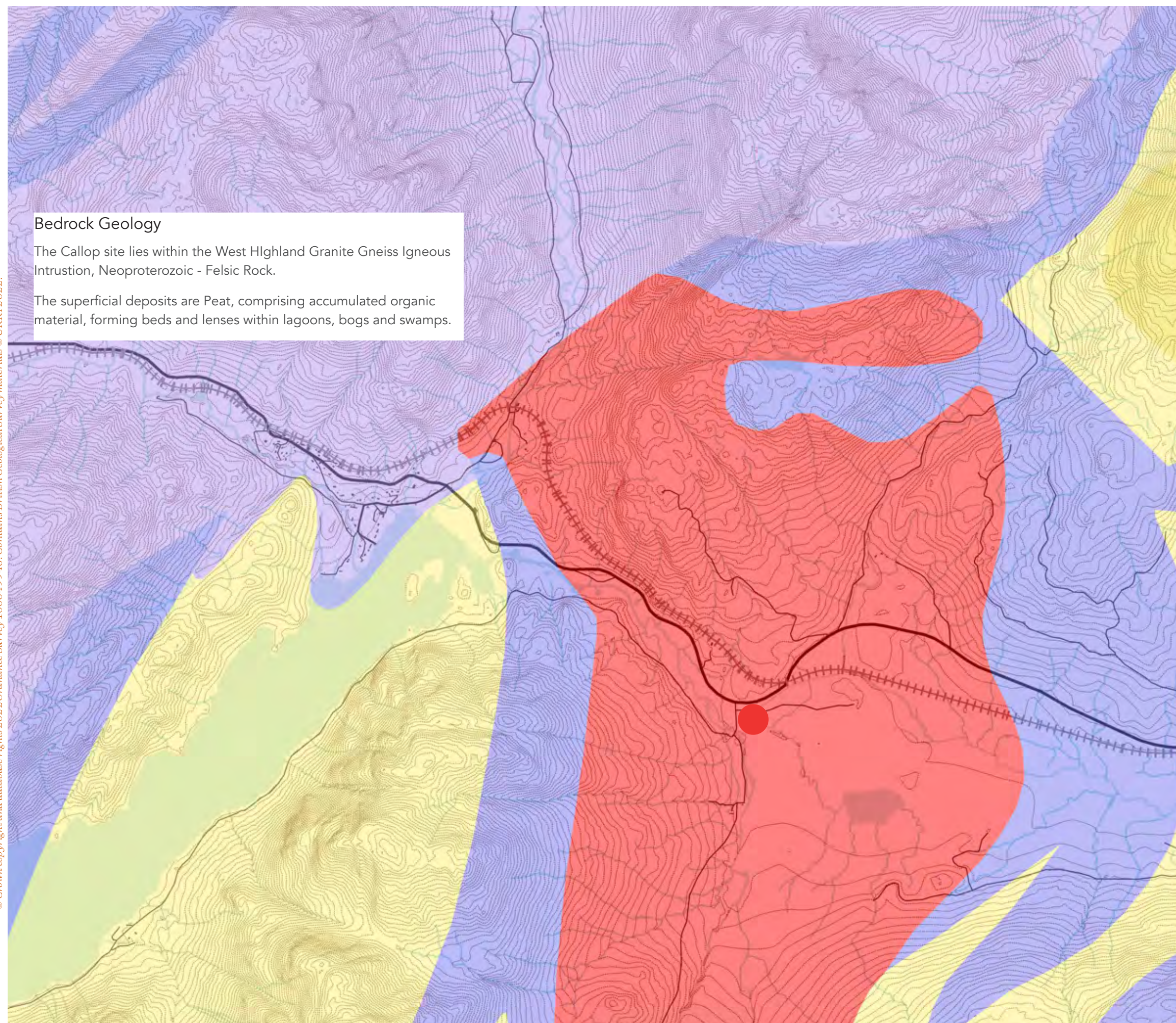
Heritage Designations
(1:10,000)

Listed Buildings

- A
- B







Bedrock Geology

The Callop site lies within the West Highland Granite Gneiss Igneous Intrusion, Neoproterozoic - Felsic Rock.

The superficial deposits are Peat, comprising accumulated organic material, forming beds and lenses within lagoons, bogs and swamps.

Bedrock Geology (1:25,000)

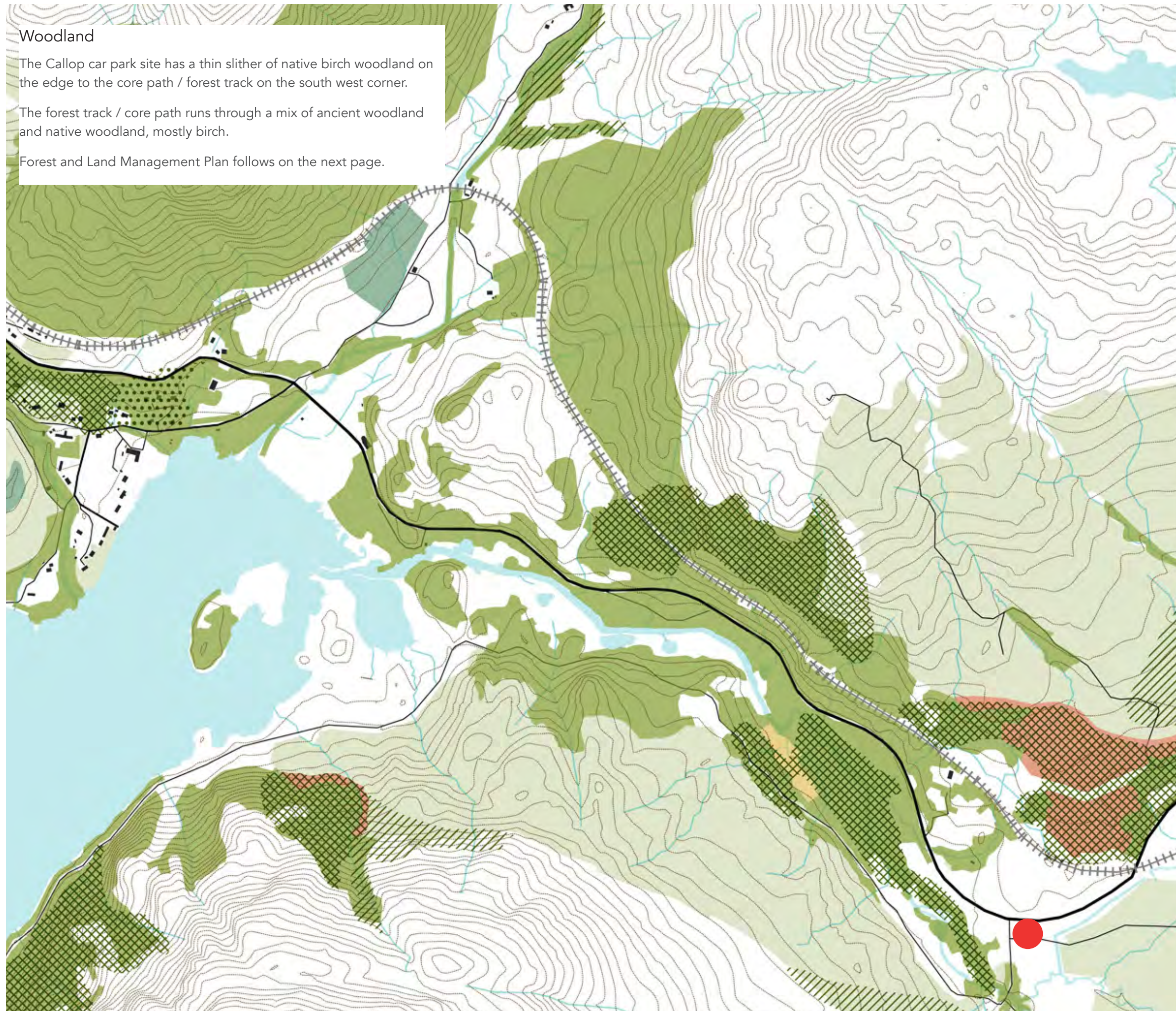
-  Glenfinnan Group - Pelite
-  Glenfinnan Group - Psammite
-  Glenfinnan Group - Psammite and Pelite
-  Loch Eil Group - Psammite
-  Loch Eil Group - Quartzite
-  Unnamed Igneous Intrusion, Neoproterozoic - Felsic-Rock

Woodland

The Callop car park site has a thin slither of native birch woodland on the edge to the core path / forest track on the south west corner.

The forest track / core path runs through a mix of ancient woodland and native woodland, mostly birch.

Forest and Land Management Plan follows on the next page.



Woodland (1:10,000)

Habitat Map of Scotland

G - Woodland, forest and other wooded land

Native Woodland Survey of Scotland

Native woodland

Nearly-native woodland

Open land habitat

PAWS (Plantations on Ancient Woodland Sites)

Ancient Woodland Inventory

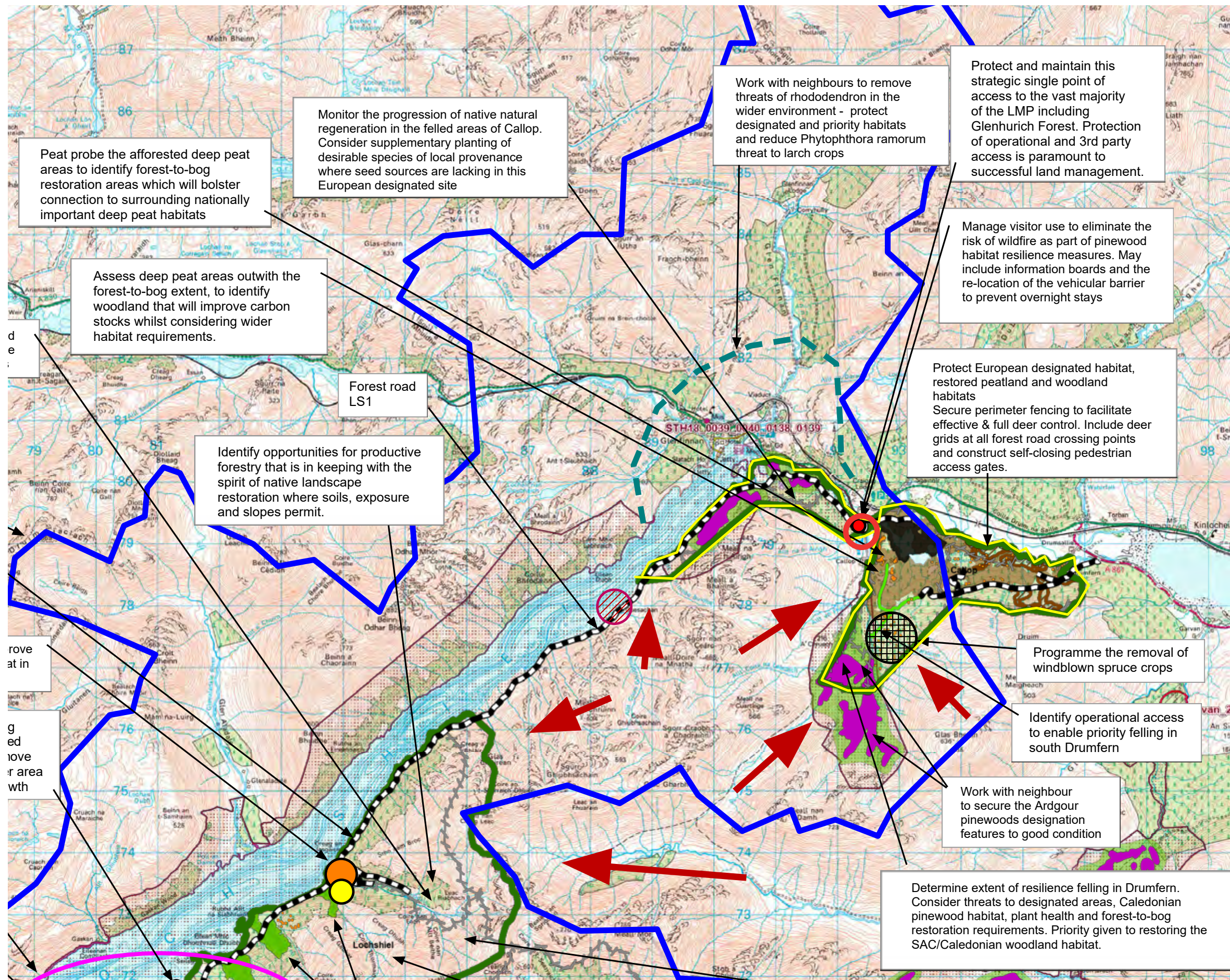
Ancient (of semi-natural origin)

Long-Established (of plantation origin)

Other (on Roy map)

0 100 200 300 400 500 m





Forest & Land Landscape Management Plan for East Loch Shiel - extract

A key priority for the LMP is to protect and maintain the single point of access off the A830 which serves FLS Glenhurich Forest and all the LMP forests outwith east Drumfern. This forest track is also the core path and serves as an access for the nearby fish farm operated by MOWI.

Monitoring of the progression of native natural regeneration in the felled areas of Callop, recognises that it may require supplementary planting of desirable species of local provenance.

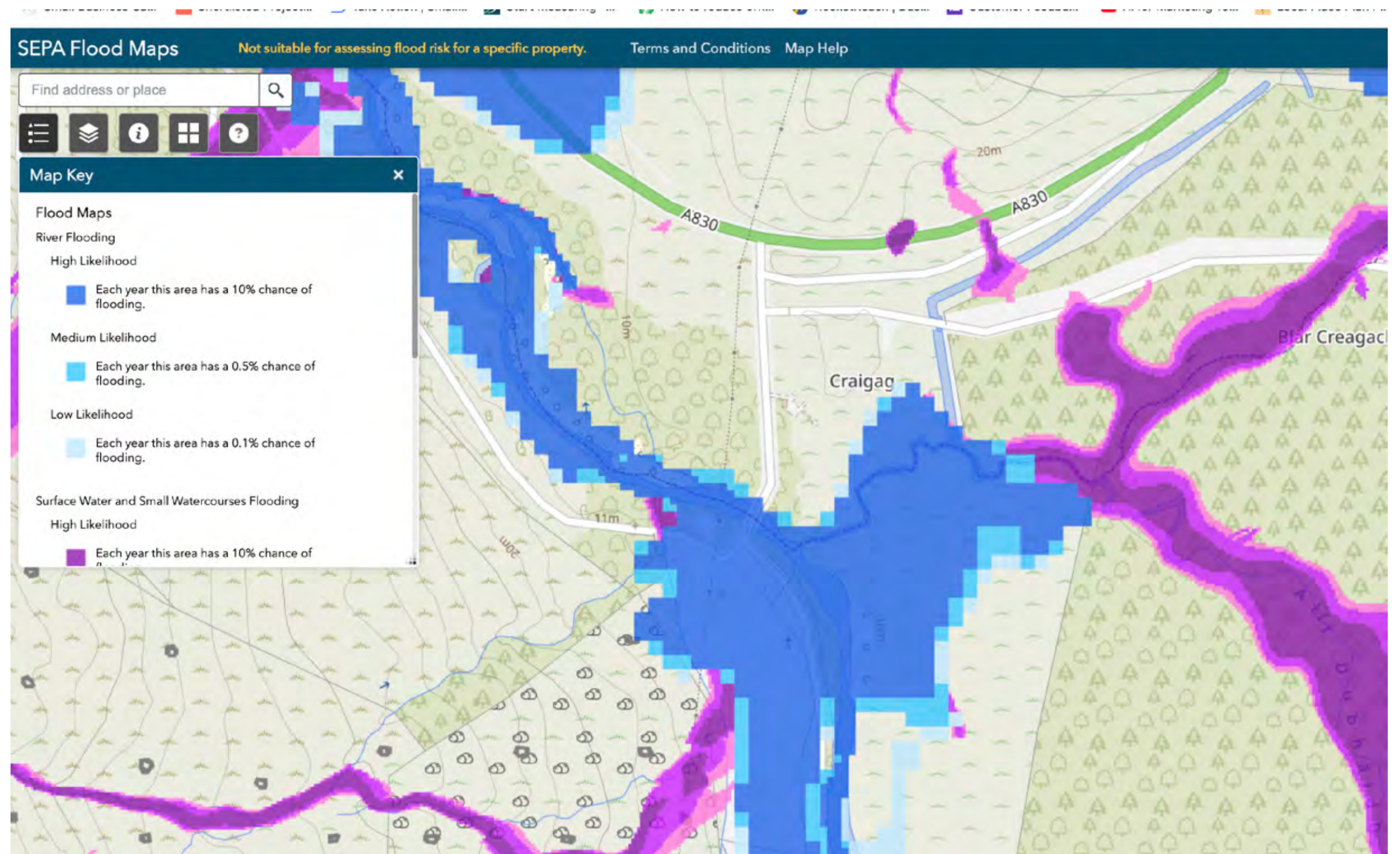
There is a desire to prevent overnight stays within the adhoc parking area next to the bridge over the River Callop to eliminate the risk of wildfires as part of the pinewood habitat resilience measures. This may include relocation of the vehicular barrier to the north side of the bridge.

SEPA Flood Maps - extract

The SEPA flood map indicates a high likelihood of River flooding (10%) each year across the southern half of the site, indicated in dark blue.

This information will require further detailed investigation to refine what is quite a coarse mapping.

This will pose a constraint where any overnight parking, structures and buildings may be located, that will have to be outwith the flood areas.



SEPA flood map extract

4 Site Analysis

Callop

The proposed car park area lies off a spur from the A830 1.5miles east of Glenfinnan. The existing access track is a priority and singular access for FLS forestry, and serves MOWI fish farm operations, as well as being designated a core path. Any development would require an upgrade to improve visibility and access onto the A830.

The old track is parallel to the existing trunk road and this is bounded with the A830 to the north defined by a rocky outcrop following the road line and a mix of self sown birch, pine and bracken.

A spur from the forest track serves another FLS track headed eastwards.

The ground is mostly boggy peatland with various ditches and a tributary of the River Callop naturally forms the southern boundary edge of any development. It's designation as deep peat will require the design to consider avoidance, mitigation and any justification for offsetting.

The SEPA flood map indicates there is high likelihood (10%) of annual flooding to the south eastern half of the site. This will require further more fine grained investigation and may constrain where or whether overnight parking is possible, and where any strutures buried or above ground may be located.

The primary forest track / core path heads south toward the Callop River bridge with this forming the natural western boundary for the site lined with birch dominant tree cover, south of the gun club shed, which will likely be relocated.

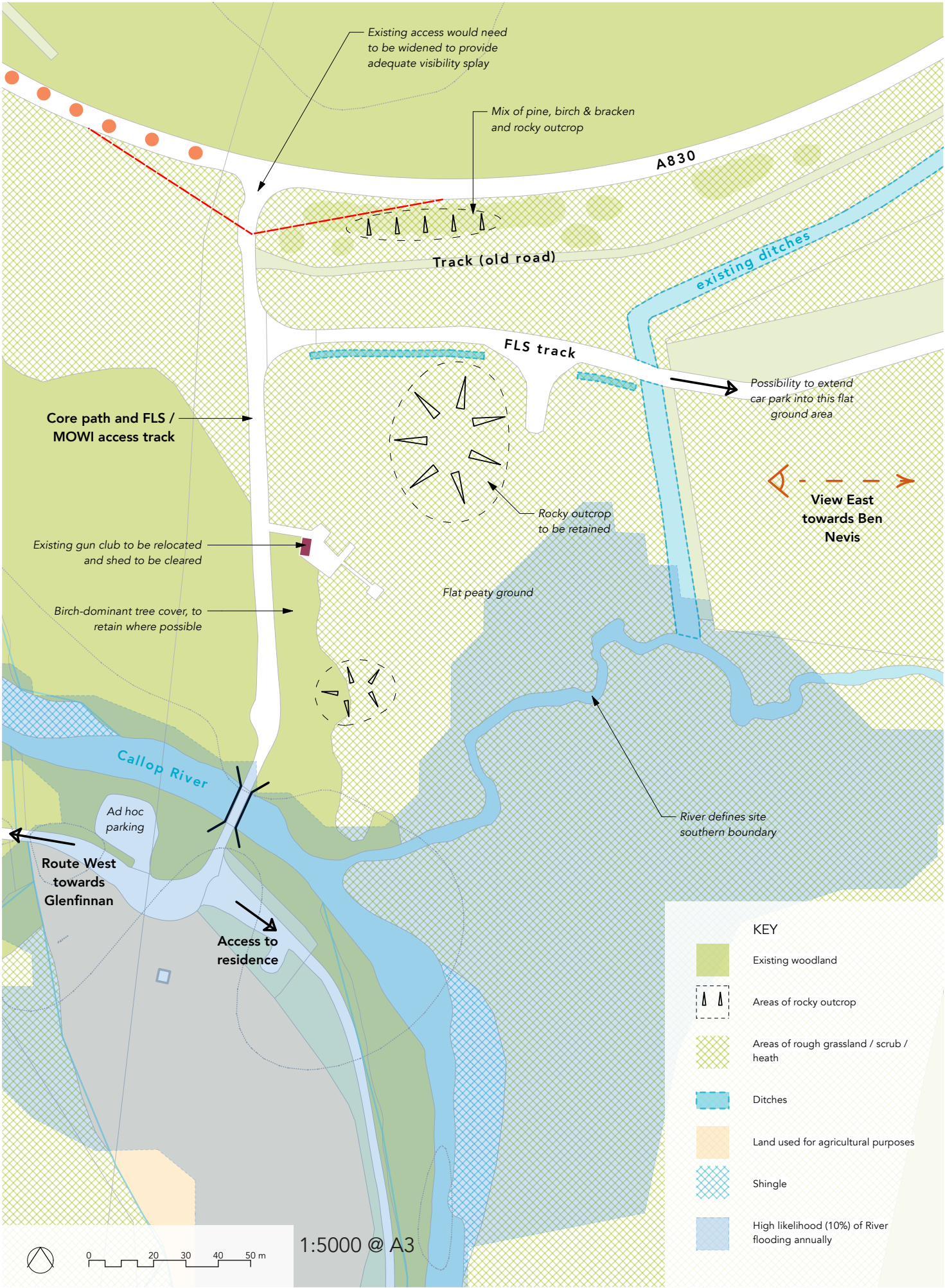
The centre of the site is dominated by a rocky outcrop, some 30 x 40m across and forming a high point a few metres higher than the surrounding flat ground.

Views east toward Ben Nevis are found, with the remainder of the site feeling semi enclosed by the surrounding woodland and rising topography.

The land east of an existing ditch has been part of a peat reclamation project by FLS, which is extensive in it's coverage.

Adhoc overnight parking south of the river bridge crossing poses a risk of wildfires to the pinewood habitat, therefore a future vehicular barrier could be relocated to north of the bridge crossing.

During peak season cars are found to be parked along the A830 from Glenfinnan almost to the Forest track entrance at Callop and pose a safety risk with pedestrians walking back toward Glenfinnan on the main road with large lorries and high volume of traffic toward Mallaig with onward connection to the Isles.



View east

4 Site Analysis

Callop



View north atop rocky outcrop



View northwest toward main road spur



View south

4 Site Analysis

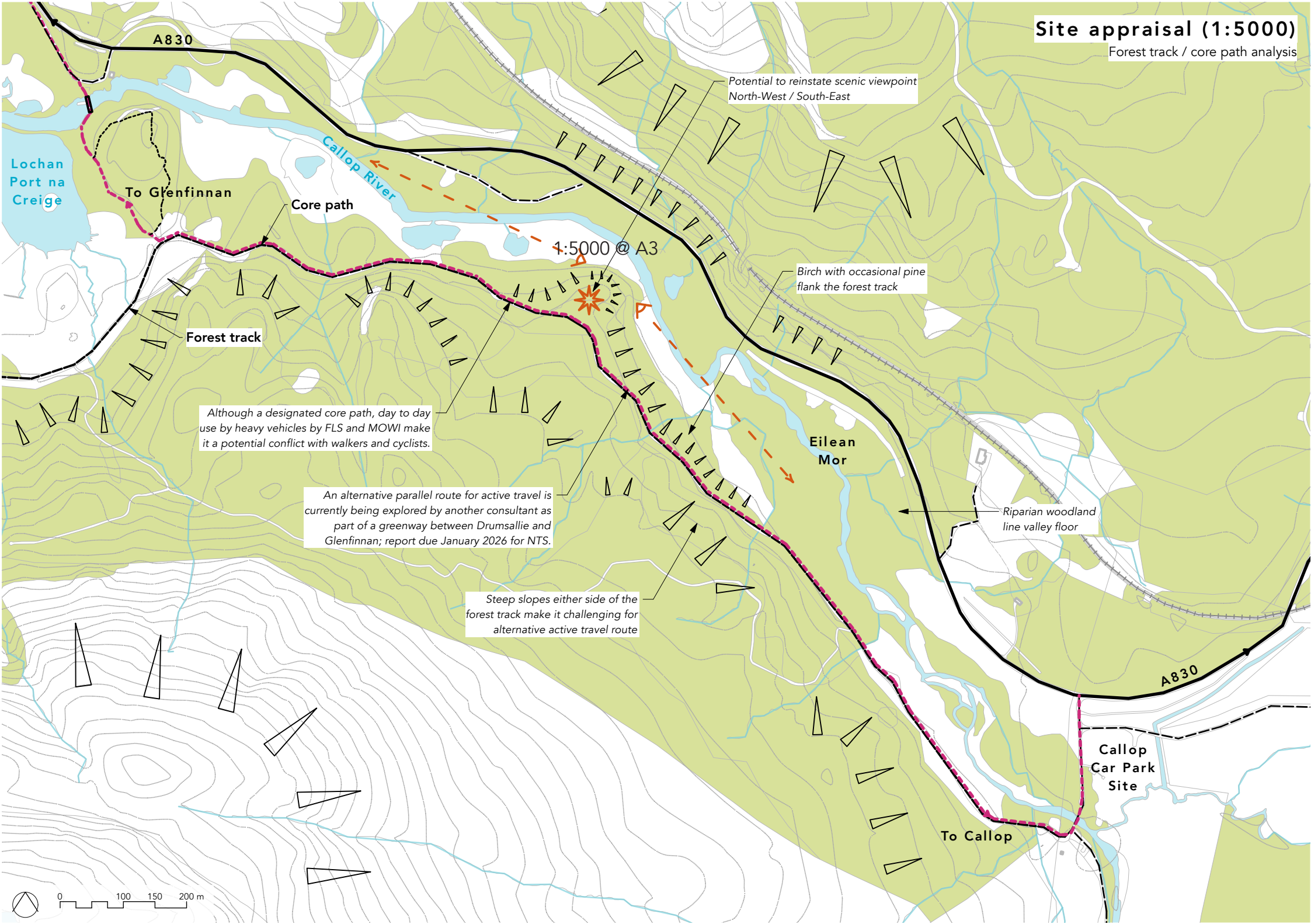
FLS Track / Core Path

The forest road is designated as a core path. This is a wide (5-6m) compacted grit track often wedged between steep rocky outcrops to either side or steep banking. If the Callop site is developed to provide overspill parking for Glenfinnan there is potential for conflict between (future anticipated) heavy vehicle use of FLS and MOWI and people walking, wheeling and cycling.

A greenway study is nearing conclusion by another consultant looking at an active travel route between Drumsallie and Glenfinnan, of which this section between Callop and Glenfinnan is under consideration. There are a number of possible options for the route.

Halfway along the track between Callop and Glenfinnan, there is a remnant path to a lookout point eastwards. This high point away from the forest track provides panoramic views northwest toward Loch Shiel and to the southeast along the valley floor. Historically there was an information panel and seating at this viewpoint, which could be considered to be reinstated.

The track gradient rises progressively from Callop before continuing on as a forest track west with the core path diverging north toward Glenfinnan around Ardgour island. There is an existing attractive path route around the Scots Pine wooded knoll with lovely views over the Loch. Currently this feature is disconnected from Glenfinnan as the boardwalk element has been removed.



1:5000 @ A3

4 Site Analysis

Forest track / Core Path



Forest track / core path view south



Loch Shiel and river valley from viewpoint



Steep rocky cut / steep slopes either side of track

4 Site Analysis

Ardgour Island

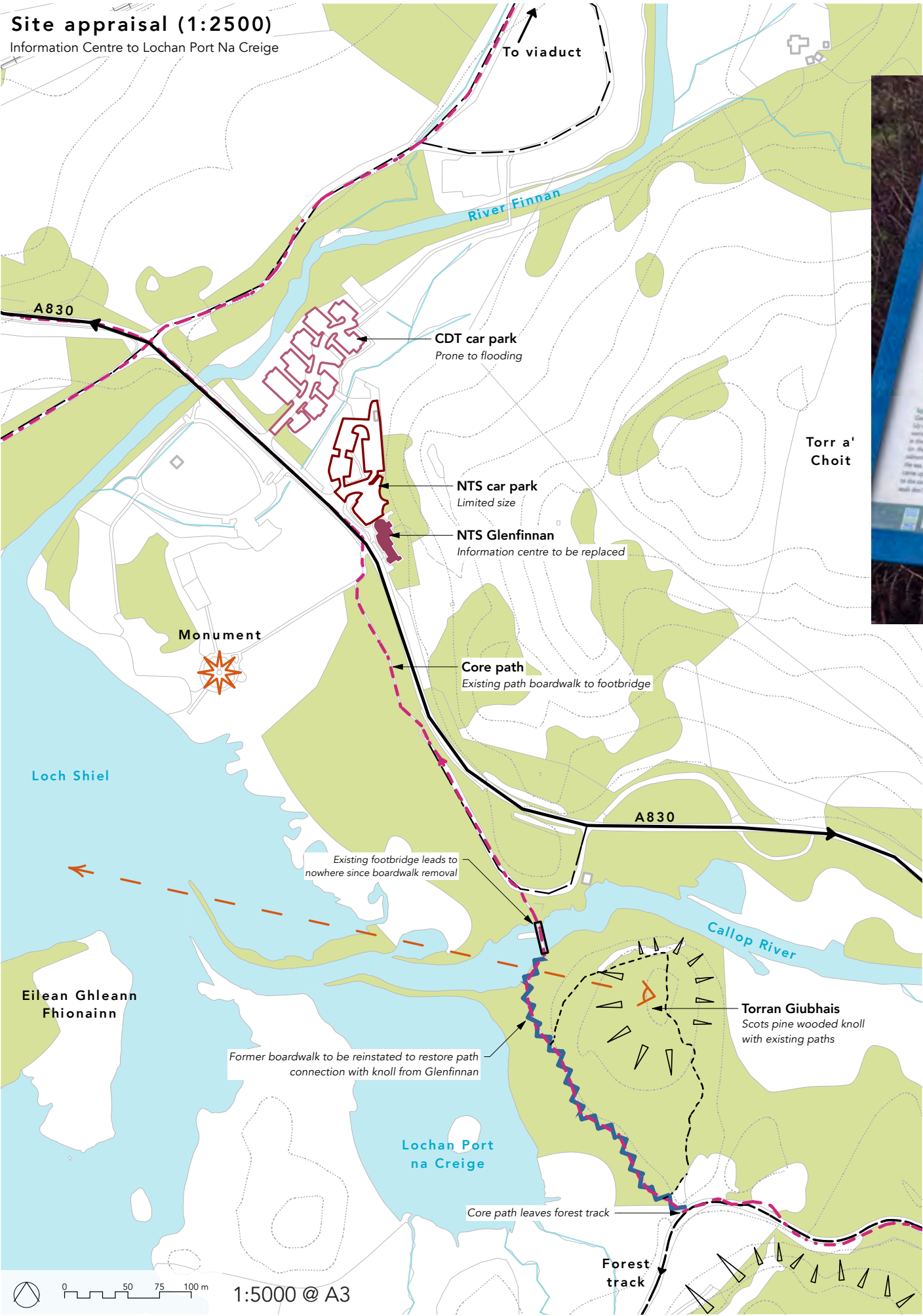
There is a small charming area to the south east of Glenfinnan south of Callop River, which comprises of a wooded knoll with path network with mature Scots pine trees.

Currently this is disconnected from Glenfinnan as the footbridge across the river, does not have the connecting boardwalk anymore.

There is a desire to reinstate this boardwalk connection from the north and providing a connecting route path from Callop to Glenfinnan to complete the link.

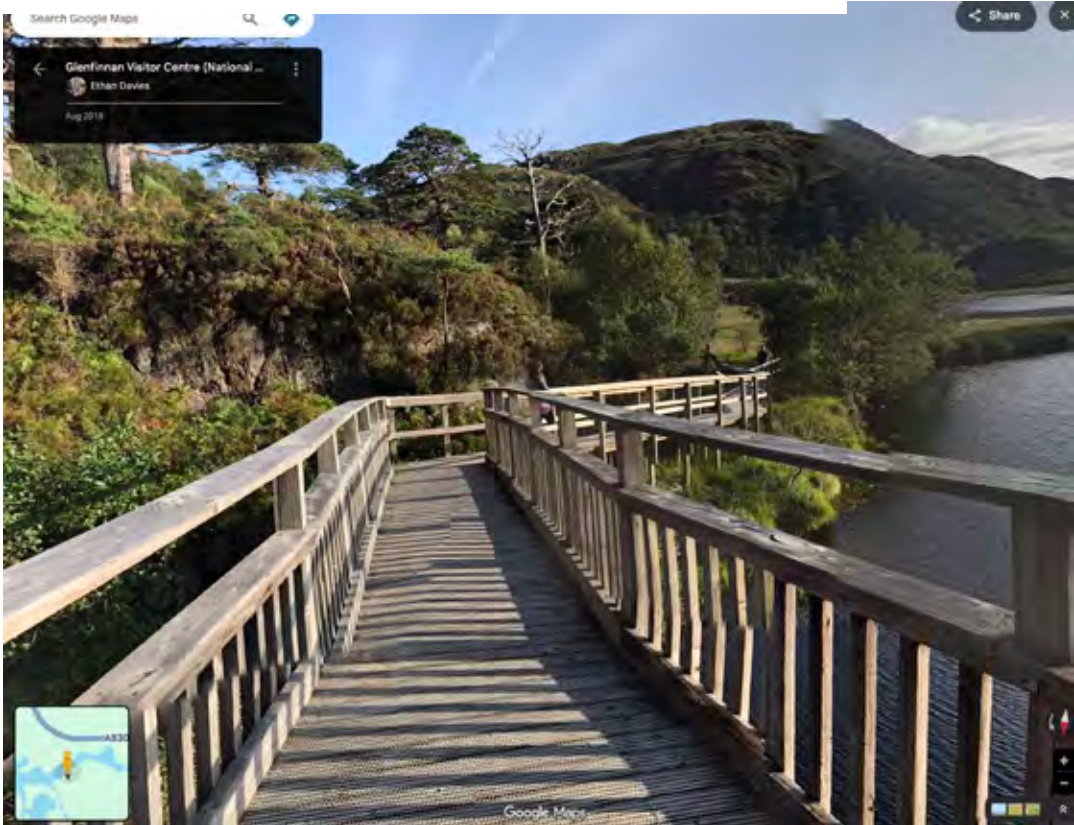
Any new boardwalk would have to take into account the rising water levels over the last few years, and would likely require the new boardwalk to sit at a higher level than before for his reason.

There is also scope to provide a new link from the knoll to the footbridge along the southern side of the river bank.



4 Site Analysis

Boardwalk at Ardgour Island



View of bridge connecting to boardwalk in 2018
(google streetview)



Steel steps to shoreline



View of footbridge from north side of Ardgour island side -
potential link path route

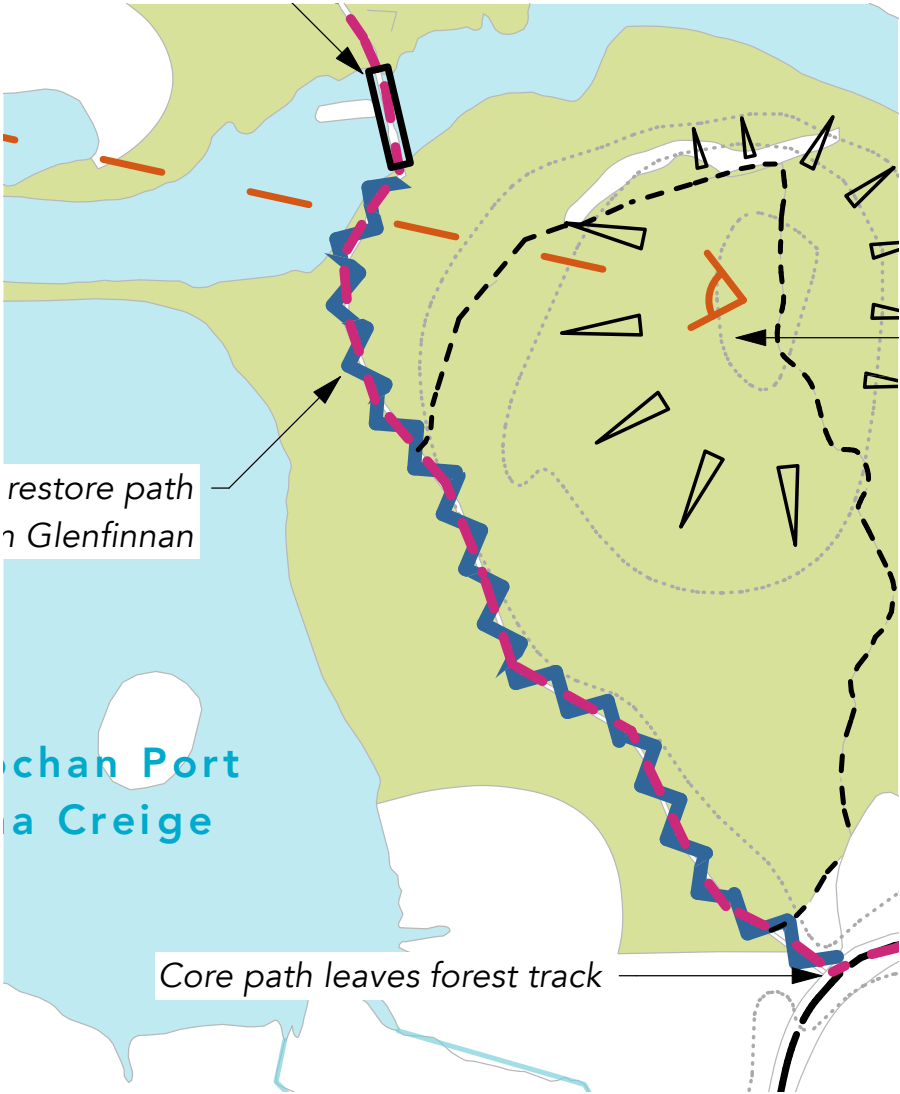


Current bridge with no boardwalk



4 Site Analysis

Boardwalk at Ardgour Island



View of former boardwalk around west side of Ardgour island looking north

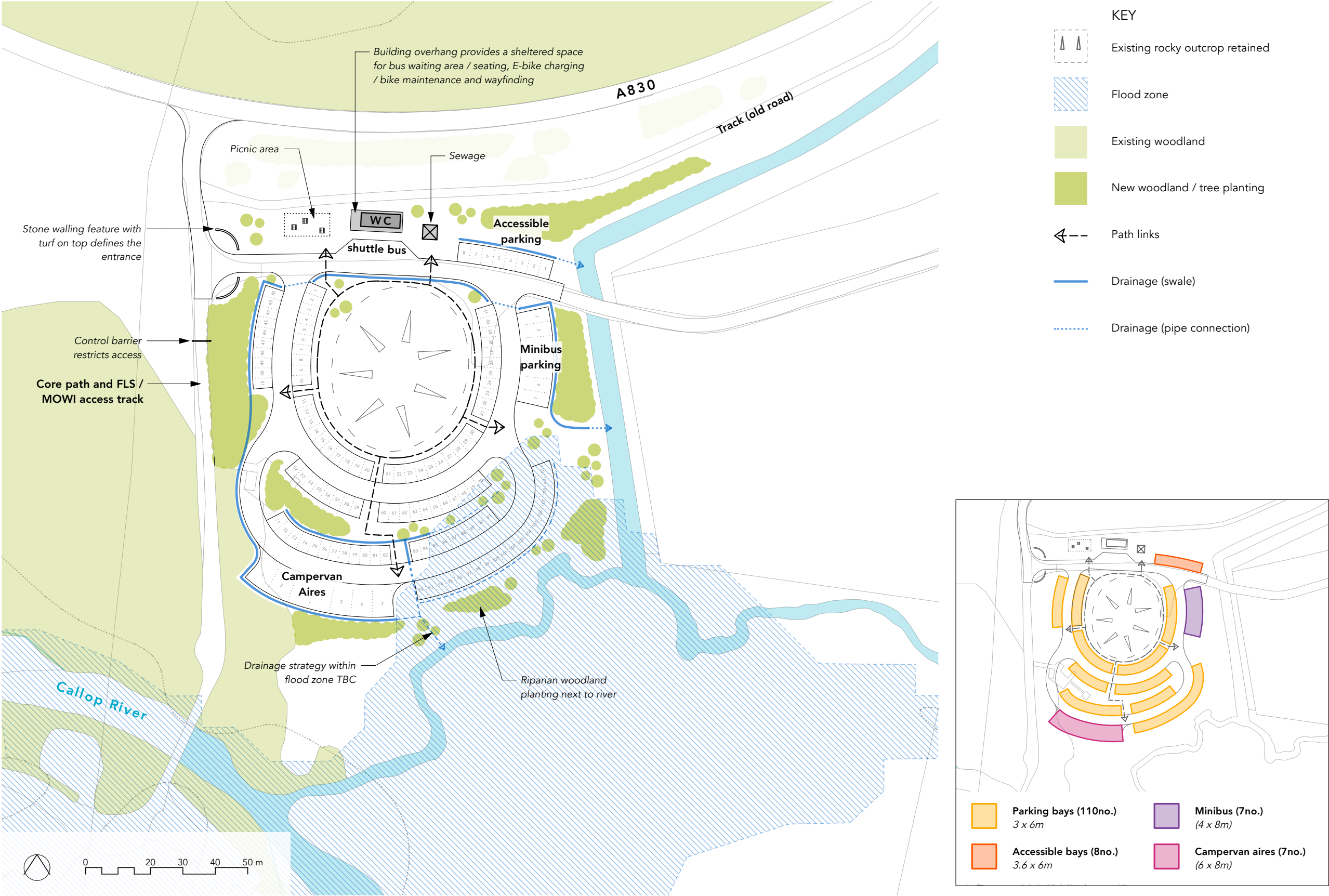


View from top of knoll at Ardgour island looking west over Loch Shiel

5 Callop Car Park Option A

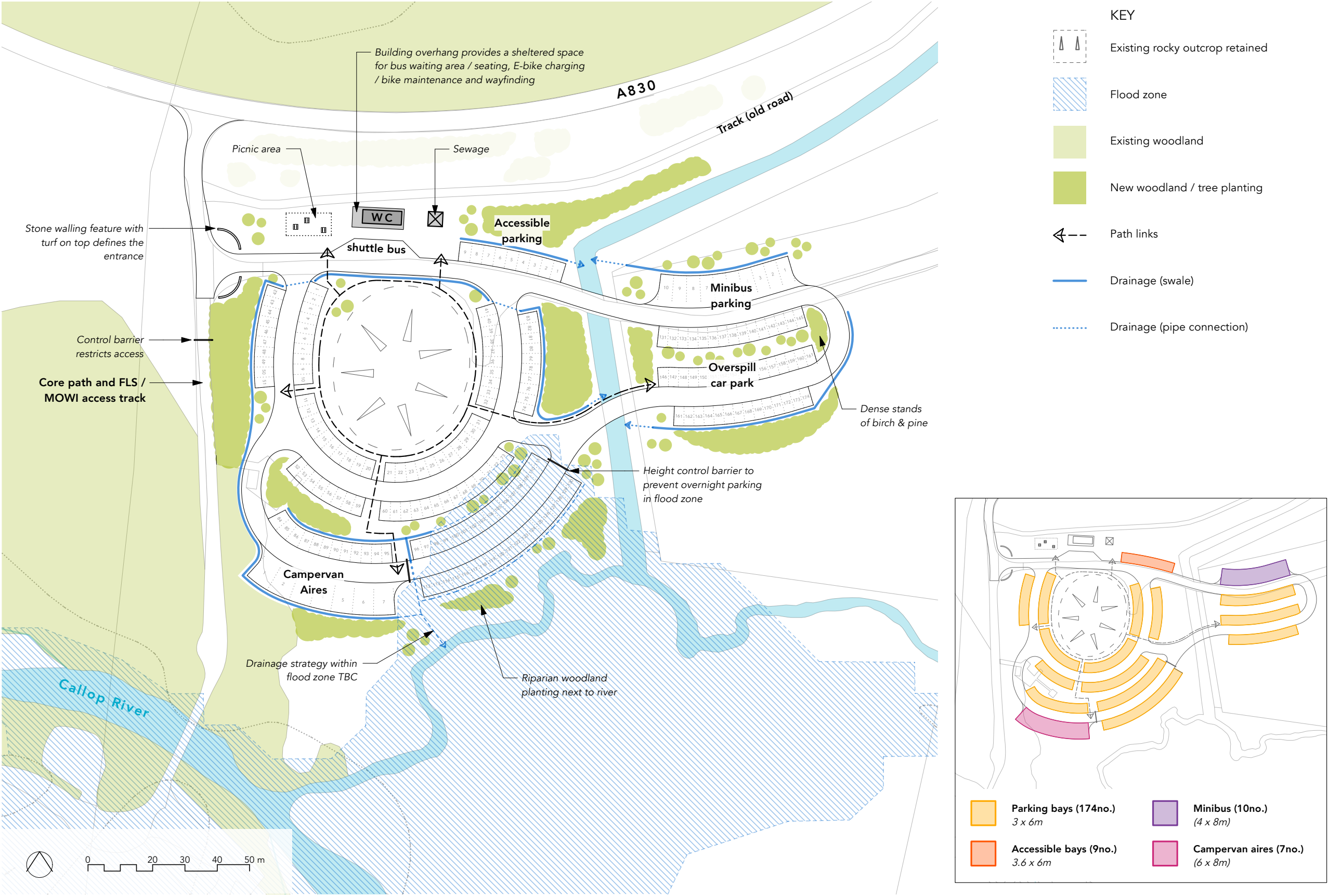
We have developed 4 options for the car park layout, all of which work with the retention of the rocky outcrop as a feature and being cognisant of the flood risk at the south eastern end of the site. There is a further set of options where coach parking can be accommodated. The visibility plays have yet to be shown on the layout at the entrance - LUC will be reviewing this and vehicular tracking for the car park layout.

- Option A - Parking 110no spaces, accessible bays 8no, minibus 7no spaces, and camper van aires 7no spaces. Pros - efficient layout with toilets, accessible parking and shuttle bus bay drop off / pick up clearly at the entrance. Cons - some parking spaces lie within the area prone to flooding.



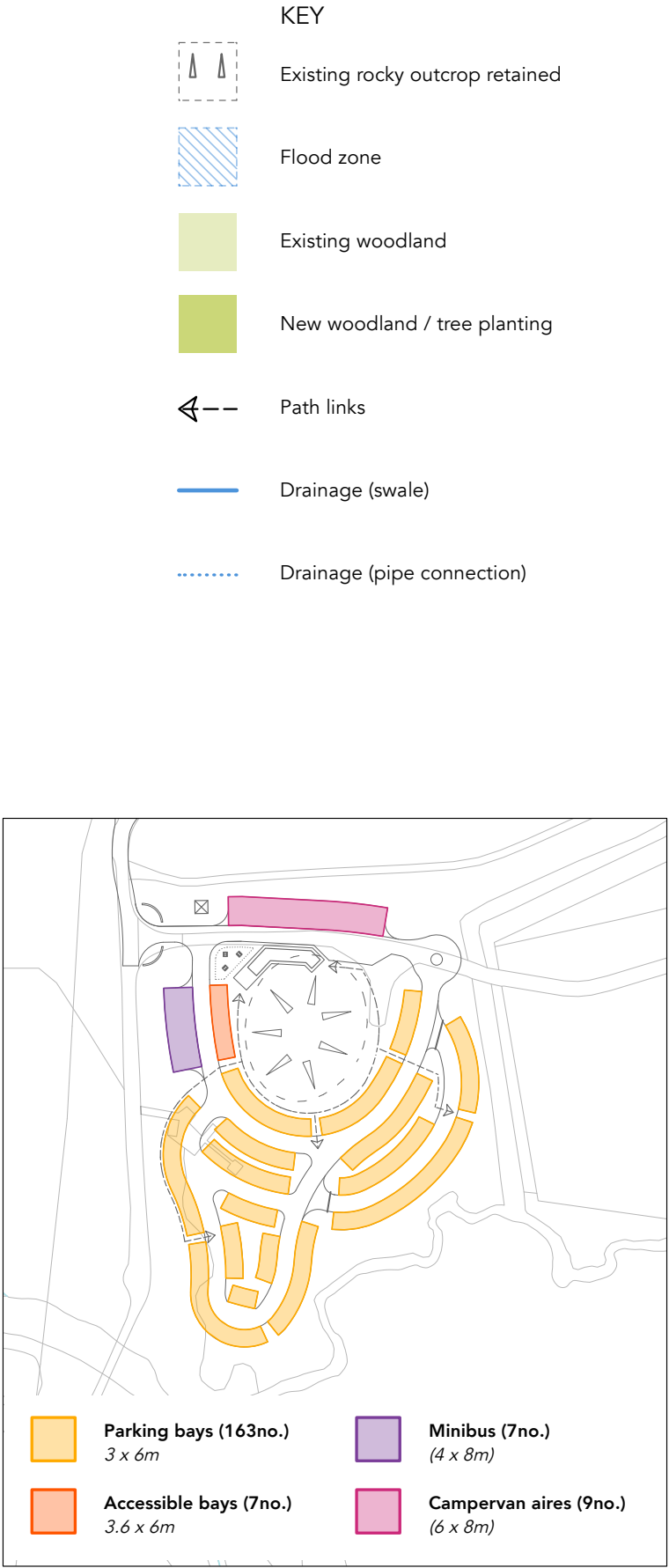
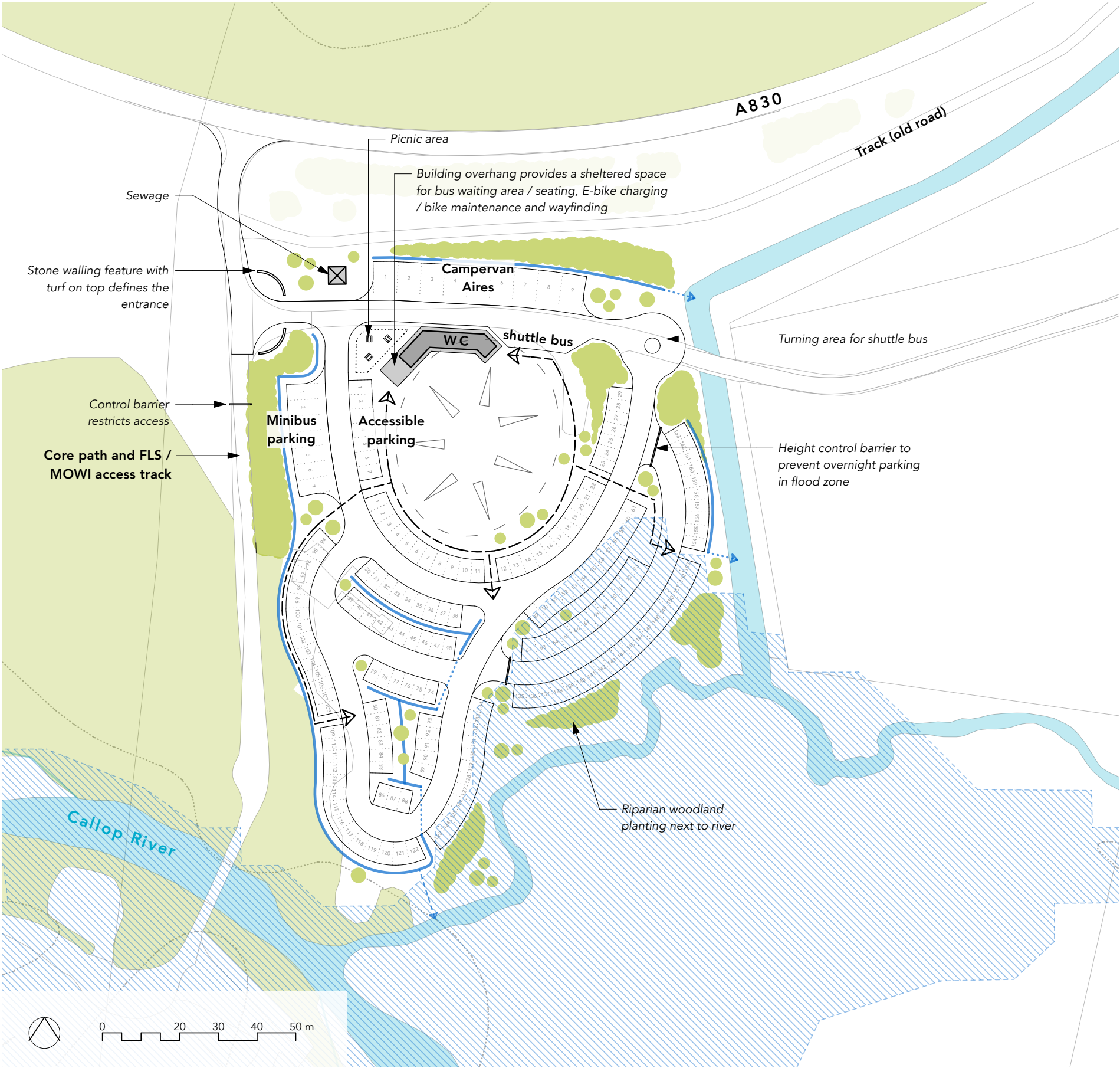
5 Callop Car Park Option B

- Option B - Parking 174no spaces, accessible bays 9no, minibus 10no spaces, and camper van aires 7no spaces. Pros- efficient layout with toilets, accessible parking and shuttle bus bay drop off / pick up clearly at the entrance. Increased number of parking spaces by extending approx 0.5Ha further east into FLS land. Cons - some parking spaces lie within the area prone to flooding.



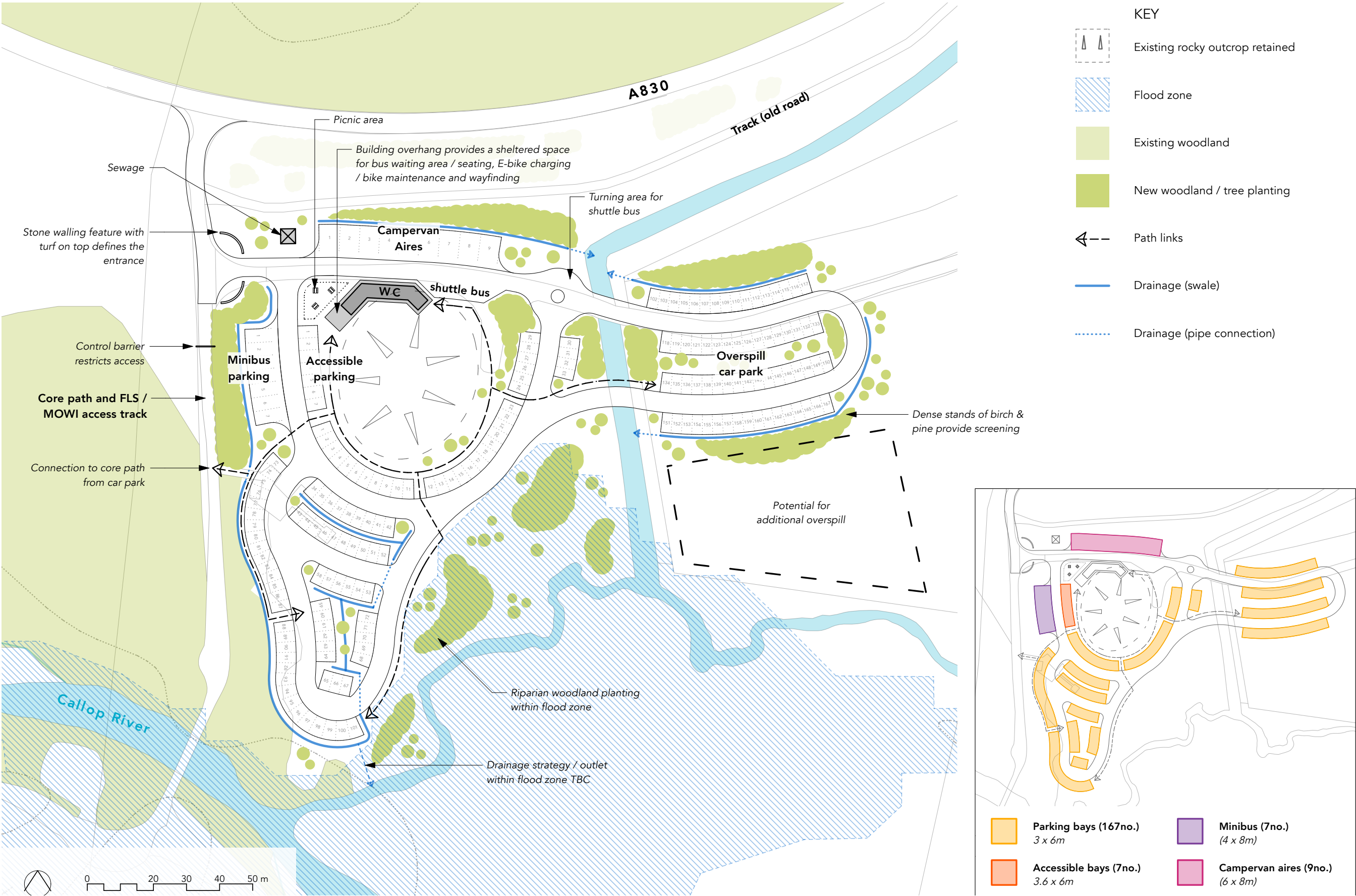
5 Callop Car Park Option C

- Option C - Parking 163no spaces, accessible bays 7no, minibus 7no spaces, and camper van aires 9no spaces. Pros- efficient layout and extending parking further south into the site. Toilets, accessible parking and shuttle bus bay drop off / pick up clearly at the entrance but beside the rocky outcrop. Shuttle bus can turn at mini roundabout and faces west ready to exit the site. Cons - some parking spaces lie within the area prone to flooding. Parking at southwest corner infringes very slightly into SSSI pinewood designation, however pinewoods are not in this area.



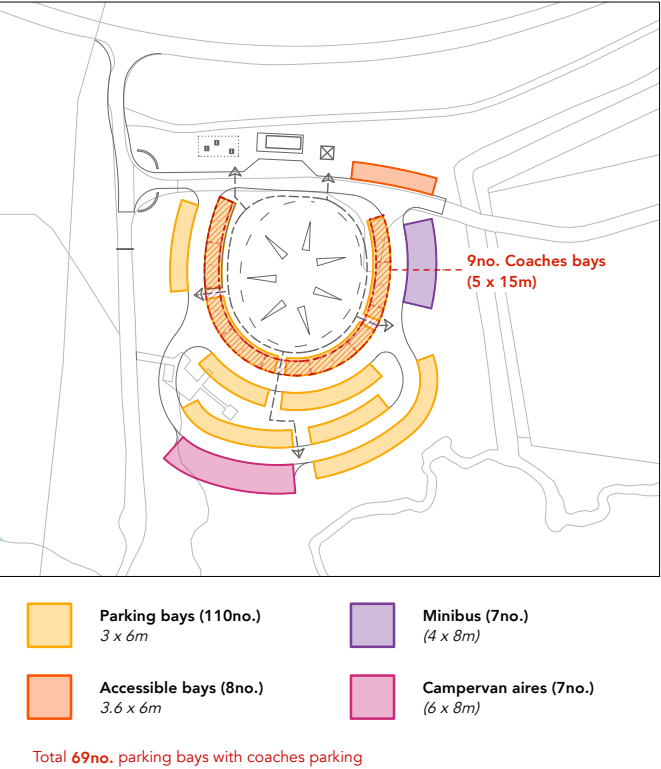
5 Callop Car Park Option D

- Option D - Parking 167no spaces, accessible bays 7no, minibus 7no spaces, and camper van aires 9no spaces. Pros- efficient layout and extending parking further south into the site. Toilets, accessible parking and shuttle bus bay drop off / pick up clearly at the entrance but beside the rocky outcrop. Shuttle bus can turn at mini roundabout and faces west ready to exit the site. This option avoids any car park infrastructure within the flood zone. Additional parking provided eastward into FLS land.Cons - Parking at southwest corner infringes very slightly into SSSI pinewood designation, however pinewoods are not in this area.

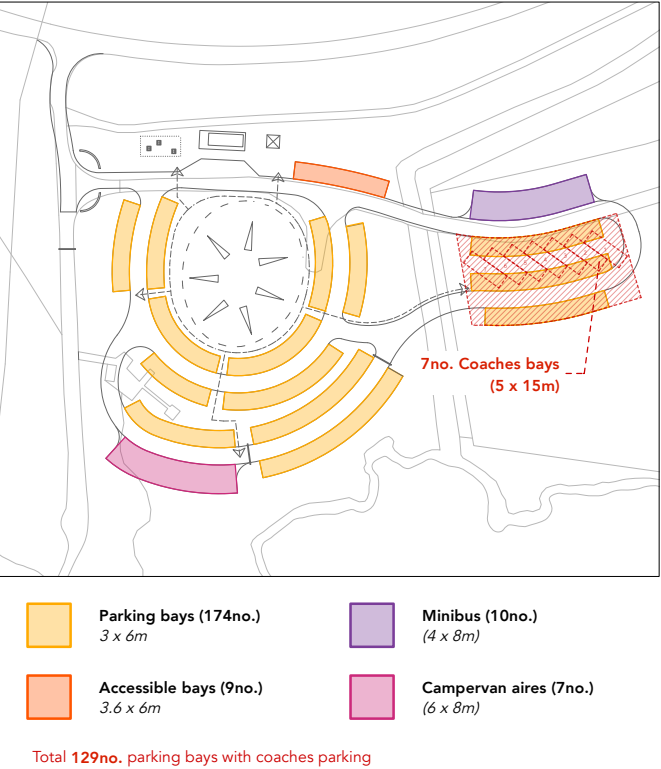


5 Callop Car Park Options with coach parking options

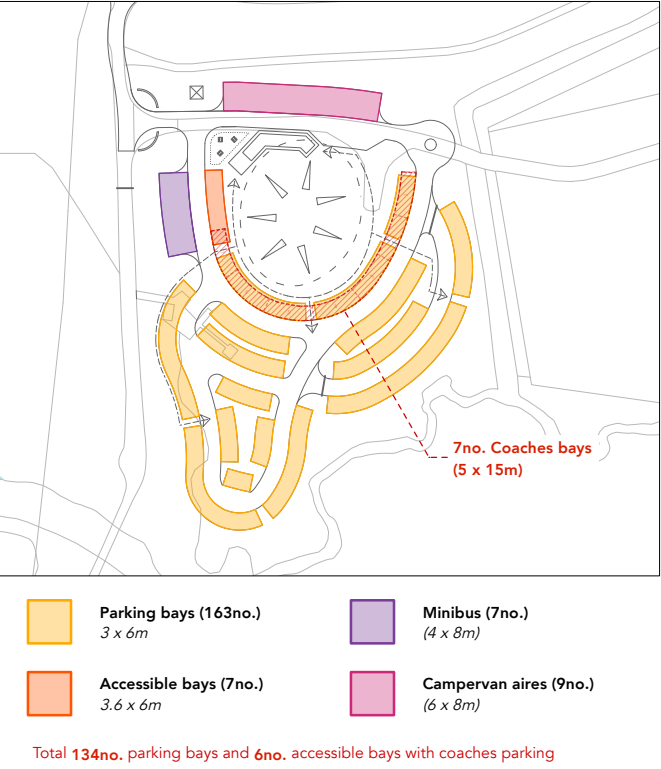
Option A



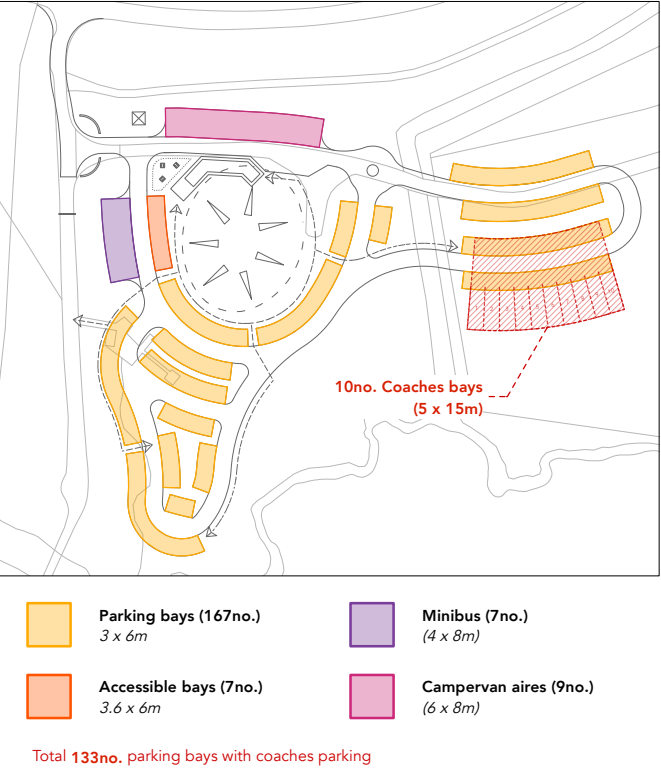
Option B



Option C



Option D



Summary of parking

- All options offer more generous size of bays than standard, for example car parking bays are 3 x 6m. This is borne from our experience on other rural tourism sites where there is a need for more generous spaces with differing types of vehicles, larger cars, and converted vans.
- All structures including the toilet block, sewage and black waste water disposal are located away from any flood risk. We have indicated a building footprint which provides 6 toilets and 2 accessible toilets, but this is a holding footprint until Rural Design develop their proposals along with any further retail offer.
- As per the feedback from the LPA we have incorporated pedestrian routes throughout, with a suggested building overhang that provides seating and shelter for those waiting for the shuttle buses, as well as a place to pack up a bike or prepare for a hike. Ebike hire, bike maintenance and way finding information could also be in this area, along with picnic tables.
- There is space for accessible parking next to the toilet block / shuttle bus, camper van Aires and mini buses. We have shown all of the options with the capacity for some coaches as overspill only, in the final diagram, assuming the majority of coaches will park at the visitor centre.
- Sustainable draining is provided via a series of swales, that would ultimately connect as an outfall into the burn or tributary of the burn, there is a small overlap through the flood zone which we think we may need a bit of drainage engineer input at the next stage.
- The landscape will including dense stands of birch and pine trees, to enclose and soften the immediate environs whilst still offering good views east toward Ben Nevis. Riparian woodland planting will line the burn edge to the south.
- The Drumshallie to Glenfinnan Greenway active travel proposals have several potential options, all of which come through the Callop site and could be accommodated in the car parking options.

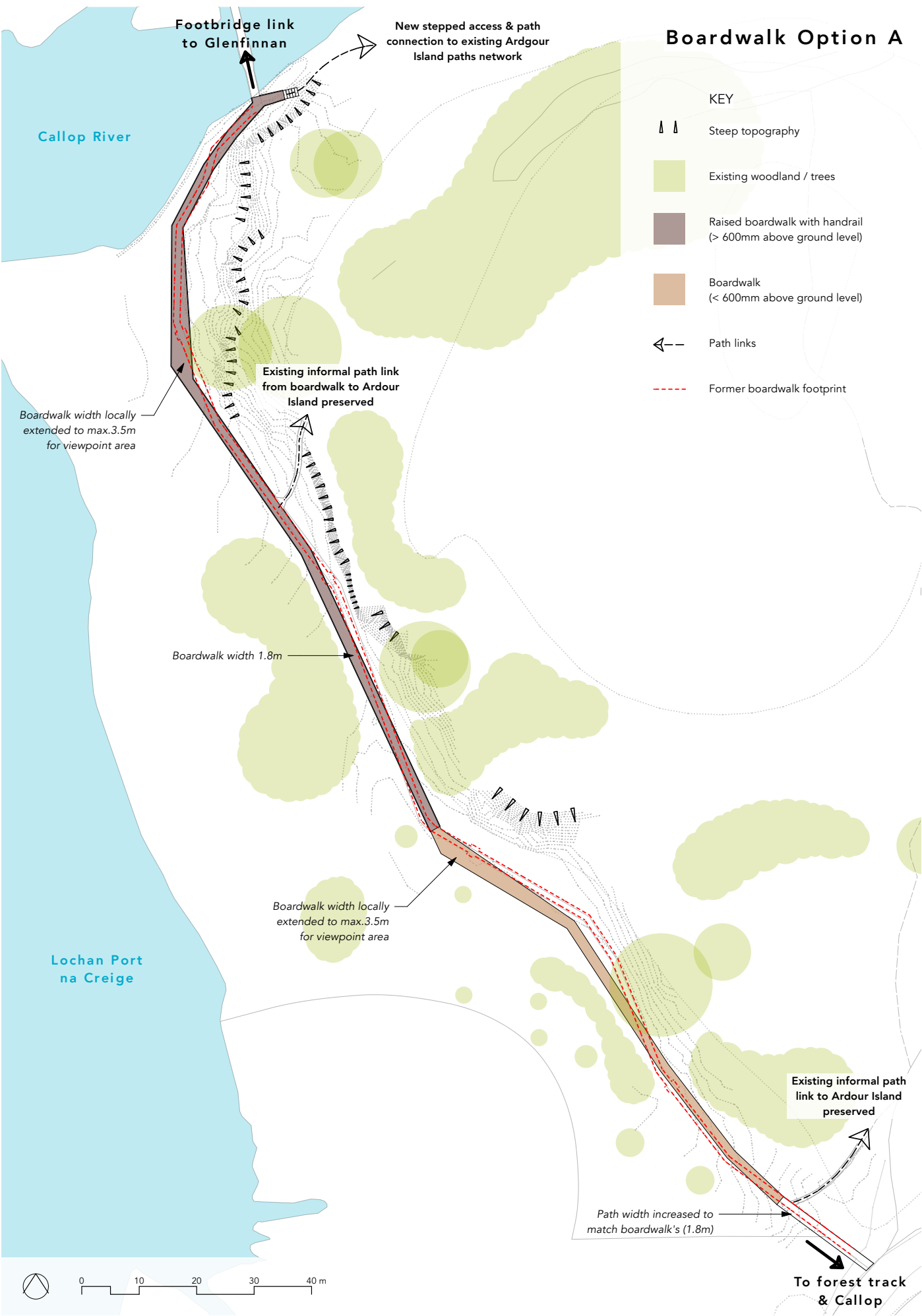
6 Ardgour Island Boardwalk Option A

We have developed 2 options for the boardwalk reinstatement to Ardgour Island. Both options take into consideration the rising water levels by proposing two boardwalk types: one is a raised or elevated boardwalk, with handrails provided where the boardwalk is more than 600mm above the water level; where it is less than 600mm level difference, the boardwalk has no handrails but would have a raised tapping edge for guiding visually impaired

The proposals provide a wider boardwalk with localised widenings to allow stopping at the views and before the pinch point of the narrower footbridge link to Glenfinnan where cyclists will have to dismount if there are others on the bridge. The boardwalk overall geometry is ‘sweetened’ for smooth transitions in changes in direction which is better for those on a bike.

An additional boardwalk stub next to the footbridge provide a potential link to the path routes around Ardour Island - this link is less accessible as it would include steps to accommodate the levels change.

- Option A - Boardwalk width of 1.8m widening out to 3.5m in places. This option doesn’t comply with Cycling by Design guidance for a two-way shared remote track but still offers improved accessibility in comparison to the previous boardwalk layout (which was 1.05m width on average with 4no. localised widenings / passing places)



6 *Ardgour Island Boardwalk Option B*

- Option B - Boardwalk width of 2.5m widening out to 4.0m in places. This option complies with Cycling by Design guidance for a two-way shared remote track (min. 2.5m width - ideal 4.0m width).

