TECHNICAL APPENDIX 15.2: SOCIO-ECONOMIC, RECREATION AND TOURISM BASELINE

1. SOCIO-ECONOMIC, RECREATION AND TOURISM BASELINE

1.1 Regional Economic Profile

1.2 Population

1.2.1 THC area has a population of over 238,000 residents and witnessed an increase of 2.3% over the period 2011 to 2021 – compared to 3.4% increase at the Scottish level and an 5.9% rise at the national (Great Britain (GB)) level (see Table 15.1). The area has witnessed a population increasing slower than the Scottish and GB increases.

Table 14.2: Population (2021)

	Highland	Scotland	Great Britain
	(Numbers)	(Numbers)	(Numbers)
All people	238,100	5,479,900	65,121,700
Male	116,700	2,672,600	31,847,600
Females	121,300	2,807,300	33,247,100

Office for National Statistics (ONS) Population Estimates

1.2.2 In terms of the working age population, 60.8% of the regional population is of working age, compared to 63.8% and 62.9% at the Scottish and GB levels respectively (see Table 15.2). This indicates that the area has a lower proportion of people of working age, which can be seen to be an economic challenge in terms of securing future economic prosperity.

Table 15.2: Population Aged 16-64 (2021)

	Highland	Highland	Scotland	Great Britain
	(Numbers)	(%)	(%)	(%)
All people	144,700	60.8	63.8	62.9
Male	71,500	61.3	64.4	63.3
Females	73,200	60.3	63.2	62.6

ONS Population Estimates

1.3 Economic Activity

1.3.1 Table 15.3 below highlights that the Highlands has a lower proportion of working age people who are economically active, when compared to the Scottish and GB levels. The regional area also has a higher proportion of self-employed people than recorded nationally.

Table 15.3: Employment and Unemployment (October 2021 - September 2022)

	Highland	Highland	Scotland	Great Britain
	(Numbers)	(%)	(%)	(%)
Economically Active	111,400	74.9	77.2	78.4
In Employment	107,000	71.8	74.5	75.5
Employees	86,000	59.2	66.5	66.0
Self Employed	20,100	12.6	7.7	9.2
Unemployed (Model Based)	3,300	3.0	3.4	3.7

ONS Population Survey

1.3.2 This suggests that although the region has fewer people of working age, those who are of working age are more economically active than recorded nationally and at the GB level. This is an economic strength and one which can help secure future economic wealth. A more detailed assessment of unemployment is set out in section 15.23.8.

1.4 Economic Inactivity

1.4.1 Corollary to lower economic activity rates, the Highlands has a higher rate of economic inactivity, as shown in Table 15.4.

Table 15.4: Economic Inactivity (October 2021 - September 2022)

	Highland	Highland	Scotland	Great Britain
	(Numbers)	(%)	(%)	(%)
Total	35,100	25.1	22.8	21.6
Student	N/A	N/A	22.7	26.6
Looking After Family / Home	N/A	N/A	16.2	19.6
Temporary Sick	N/A	N/A	2.8	2.2
Long-Term Sick	7,600	21.5	31.9	25.5
Discouraged	N/A	N/A	N/A	0.2
Retired	14,300	40.9	15.2	14.1
Other	N/A	N/A	10.9	11.8
Wants a Job	7,600	21.8	19.6	18.4
Dose Not Want a Job	27,500	78.2	80.4	81.6

ONS Population Survey

1.4.2 It is worth noting that of those economically inactive, the region has a higher proportion of people who 'want a job' (21.8%) compared to the Scottish (19.6%) level. This suggests there is more of a desire to find work in the Highlands than recorded nationally.

1.5 Workless Households

1.5.1 In terms of worklessness, there are more households in the region, compared to the Scottish level, that are workless households (see Table 15.5).

Table 15.5: Workless Households (October 2021 - September 2022)

	Highland	Scotland	Great Britain
Number of Workless Households	12,100	392,200	2,866,800
Percentage of Households That Are Workless	19.7	18.6	14.0
Number of Children in Workless Households	N/A	102,400	1,249,200
Percentage of Children Who Are In Households That Are Workless	N/A	12.0	10.2

ONS Population Survey

1.6 Claimant Count Unemployment

The latest claimant count unemployment rate highlights that although the region has a lower rate than the Scottish rate, the unemployment rate is also below the GB average (see Table 15.6).

Table 15.6: Claimant Count Unemployment (December 2022)

	Highland	Highland	Scotland	Great Britain
	(Numbers)	(%)	(%)	(%)
All People	3,385	2.4	3.2	3.7
Males	1,940	2.7	3.9	4.2
Females	1,440	2.0	2.4	3.1

ONS Claimant Count

1.6.1 Although unemployment is now at its lowest rate since December 2018, there are emerging signs that it is beginning to rise, and is expected to rise as the UK experiences an economic slowdown as a result of the cost of living crisis.

1.6.2 Although regional unemployment is below the national unemployment rate, regional unemployment has increased from 2.2% in October 2022 to 2.4% in December 2022, this represents an increase of 7% in the number of people out of work and claiming benefits over the last three months of 2022.

1.6.3 Table 15.7 below demonstrates that the regional unemployment levels are below the Scottish and GB levels across all age cohorts.

Table 15.7: Claimant Count Unemployment by Age (December 2022)

	Highland	Highland	Scotland	Great Britain
	(Numbers)	(%)	(%)	(%)
Aged 16+	3,385	2.4	3.2	3.7
Aged 16 - 17	25	0.5	0.6	0.2
Aged 18 – 24	550	3.5	4.1	4.7
Aged 25 – 49	1,900	2.8	3.7	4.2
Aged 50+	905	1.7	2.3	2.8

ONS Claimant Count

1.7 Employment By Occupation

1.7.1 Table 15.8 highlights the type of employment at the Highlands, Scottish and GB levels. It indicates that the region has a higher proportion of skilled trade, caring leisure and service, sales and customer service posts, process plant and machine operatives and elementary occupations than the Scottish and GB levels.

Table 15.8: Employment by Occupation (October 2021 - September 2022)

	Highland	Highland	Scotland	Great Britain
	(Numbers)	(%)	(%)	(%)
Major Group 1-3	41,600	38.9	49.0	51.6
1 Managers, Directors and Senior Officials	7,500	7.0	8.2	10.5
2 Professional Occupations	20,000	18.7	25.7	26.0
3 Associate Professional & Technical	14,200	13.2	15.0	14.9
Major Group 4-5	25,400	23.8	18.8	18.8
4 Administrative & Secretarial	11,500	10.7	10.0	10.1
5 Skilled Trades Occupations	14,000	13.1	8.8	8.6
Major Group 6-7	19,800	18.5	16.6	14.5
6 Caring, Leisure and Other Service Occupations	9,200	8.6	8.6	8.0
7 Sales and Customer Service Occupations	10,700	10.0	8.0	6.5
Major Group 8 – 9	20,200	18.8	15.5	15.1
8 Process Plant & Machine Operatives	7,400	6.9	5.7	5.5
9 Elementary Occupations	12,800	12.0	9.7	9.5

ONS Annual Population Survey

1.7.2 Regionally there are fewer people employed in professional, associate professional and technical occupations.

1.8 Jobs

1.8.1 The region has a lower proportion of full-time jobs and more part-time jobs than the Scottish and GB levels as set out in Table 14.10.

1.8.2 In terms of industry of employment, the Highlands have higher rates of water supply related posts, construction jobs, wholesale and retail trade, accommodation and food service occupations, education, health and social work jobs and arts, entertainment and recreation posts.

1.8.3 The construction sector is well represented at the Highlands level, suggesting the local area is well positioned to benefit from aspects of The Proposed Development, as shown in Table 15.9 below.

Table 15.9: Employee Jobs (2021)

	Highland	Highland	Scotland	Great Britain
	(Numbers)	(%)	(%)	(%)
Total Employee Jobs	109,000			
Full-Time	69,000	63.3	66.4	68.1
Part-Time	39,000	35.8	33.6	31.9
Employee Jobs by Industry				
B: Mining and Quarrying	400	0.4	1.0	0.1
C: Manufacturing	6,000	5.5	7.1	7.6
D: Electricity, Gas, Steam and Air Conditioning Supply	1,250	1.1	0.7	0.4
E: Water Supply; Sewerage, Waste Management and Remediation Activities	2,000	1.8	0.8	0.7
F: Construction	8,000	7.3	6.1	4.9
G: Wholesale and Retail Trade; Repair of Motor Vehicles and Motorcycles	17,000	15.6	14.4	14.4
H: Transportation and Storage	4,500	4.1	4.2	5.1
I: Accommodation and Food Service Activities	12,000	11.0	7.6	7.5
J: Information and Communication	2,250	2.1	3.1	4.5
K: Financial and Insurance Activities	800	0.7	3.1	3.6
L: Real Estate Activities	1,500	1.4	1.5	1.8
M: Professional, Scientific and Technical Activities	5,000	4.6	6.5	8.9
N: Administrative and Support Service Activities	6,000	5.5	8.0	8.9
O: Public Administration and Defence; Compulsory Social Security	6,000	5.5	6.6	4.6
P: Education	9,000	8.3	8.7	8.8
Q: Human Health and Social Work Activities	19,000	17.4	15.9	13.7
R: Arts, Entertainment and Recreation	3,500	3.2	2.5	2.3
S: Other Service Activities	2,000	1.8	1.8	1.9

ONS Annual Population Survey

1.8.4 The region has a lower proportion of mining and quarrying roles, manufacturing employment, Information Technology and Communications (ITC) roles, financial service posts, professional services and public administrative related jobs. The manufacturing sector is underrepresented which may affect the region's ability to benefit from The Proposed Development.

1.9 Businesses

1.9.1 In terms of the business base, the Highlands has a higher proportion of micro enterprise and smaller business units (in terms of employment numbers) than witnessed at the national (Scottish) level. The incidence of larger businesses is lower in the regional level than recorded nationally as shown in Table 15.10.

Table 15.10: Business Counts (2022)

	Highland	Highland	Scotland	Scotland
	(Numbers)	(%)	(Numbers)	(%)
Enterprises				

Micro (0 To 9)	9,590	88.8	152,470	87.8
Small (10 To 49)	1,060	9.8	17,775	10.2
Medium (50 To 249)	130	1.02	2,730	1.6
Large (250+)	25	0.2	675	0.4
Total	10,805		173,655	
Local Units				
Micro (0 To 9)	11,345	83.1	177,455	81.2
Small (10 To 49)	1,960	14.4	33,375	15.3
Medium (50 To 249)	315	2.3	6,580	3.0
Large (250+)	25	0.2	1,060	0.5
Total	13,645		218,470	

Inter Departmental Business Register

1.10 Qualifications

1.10.1 In terms of education attainment levels, the region has more qualified residents and also has fewer residents with no qualifications than recorded at the Scottish and GB levels as show in Table 15.11.

Table 15.11: Qualifications (January 2021 - December 2021)

	Highland	Highland	Scotland	GB
	(Numbers)	(%)	(%)	(%)
Individual Levels				
NVQ4 and Above	63,500	44.8	50.0	43.6
NVQ3 and Above	88,100	62.3	64.8	61.5
NVQ2 and Above	118,600	83.8	79.6	78.1
NVQ1 and Above	129,100	91.2	86.4	87.5
Other Qualifications	N/A	N/A	5.8	5.9
No Qualifications	7,600	5.4	7.8	6.6

ONS Annual Population Survey

1.11 Earnings

1.11.1 In terms of earnings, the region has higher rates of gross weekly wages than those achieved at the Scottish and GB levels as presented in Table 15.12. The hourly pay is generally below the Scottish and GB levels.

Table 15.12: Earnings by Place of Residence (2022)

	Highland	Scotland	GB
	(£)	(£)	(£)
Gross Weekly Pay			
Full-Time Workers	664.3	640.3	642.2
Male Full-Time Workers	678.3	675.1	687.5
Female Full-Time Workers	626.3	604.7	584.5
Hourly Pay – Excluding Overtime			
Full-Time Workers	16.39	16.59	16.37
Male Full-Time Workers	16.10	16.91	16.97
Female Full-Time Workers	16.63	16.29	15.49

ONS Annual Survey of Hours and Earnings

1.12 Scottish Index of Multiple Deprivation

1.12.1 The Scottish Index of Multiple Deprivation[1] ranks all of the 6,976 data zones across Scotland. The data zones are ranked from 1 (most deprived data zone) to 6,976 (least deprived). Data zones are the key geography for the dissemination of small area statistics in Scotland and are widely used across the public and private sector.

1.12.2 The ranking is based on a number of indicators across seven categories: income, employment, health, education, skills and training, housing, geographic access and crime. Data zones ranked between 1 and 1,185 are the most deprived 15% of data zones across Scotland, and those ranked between 1 and 1395 are the most deprived 20%.

1.12.3 THC has 30 data zones (from a total of 312 Highland data zones) designated within the most deprived 20% in Scotland, this is an increase from SIMD 2012 when the local authority had 17 wards designated within the most deprived 20% in Scotland. Although the Highlands cannot be deemed to be an area of deprivation, there remain pockets of deprivation, largely in and around Inverness, and this position has worsened over the last five years.

1.13 Local Socio-Economic Baseline

1.13.1 This section includes a headline overview of the local economy, which is defined as the Lochaber, Skye and Wester Ross area.

1.13.2 A review of Highlands and Islands Enterprise's Economic Profile for Lochaber, Skye and Wester Ross[2] has been completed and the following summary of the local area is presented below:

- Total population was 39,331 in 2020, an increase of 0.5% since 2011 compared to 0.5% increase regionally and 3.1% nationally;
- Population density (4 people per sq. km) is lower than that for the Highlands and Islands (12 people per sq. km) but lower than the Scottish average (70 people per sq. km);
- Lochaber, Skye and Wester Ross has an older age profile than the Highlands and Islands and Scotland;
- An Economic Activity rate (75.2%) lower than the Highlands and Islands (79.4%) but higher than Scotland (76.5%);
- A percentage of self-employed (22.4%) higher than the Highlands and Islands (11.6%) nut higher than Scotland (8.4%); and
- An employment rate (73.3%) below the Highlands and Islands (77.5%) and Scotland (73.8%).

1.13.3 Lochaber, Skye and Wester Ross experienced a slight population growth between 2011 and 2020. However, the population is projected to decline by 2043, falling by 6% in Lochaber, compared to rises in Skye. It has an older age profile similar to the regional average, with a dependency ratio (number of people aged 0-15 and 65+ per 100 people of working age) of 65.2%, compared to 65.5% regionally and 56.2% nationally.

1.13.4 Lochaber, Skye and Wester Ross will need to respond to the requirements of young people who have been disproportionally affected economically than the rest of the region. Lochaber, Skye and Wester Ross is likely to be harder hit than the regional and Scotland average given:

- Expected GVA decrease of -£756m across Highland in 2020, a decline of 11.7%, in line with the regional average (11.7%) but higher than the national level (10.7%).
- The dominance of the tourism sector in the area. Accommodation and food services accounts for a quarter of all employment in Lochaber, Skye and Wester Ross (21.1%), more than double the shares regionally (10.0%) and nationally (7.9%). While lack of overseas visitor spend may be partially offset by UK staycation expenditure, this sector is still facing significant restrictions.

[1] Scottish Government (2020). Scottish Index of Multiple Deprivation
[2] Highlands and Islands Enterprise (2020). Economic Profile for Lochaber, Skye and Wester Ross

- Driven by the high share of employment in accommodation and food services, the area has a higher share of employment in the five sectors most exposed to COVID-19 (54% compared to 41% regionally and 38% nationally).
- Its high level of self-employment and its higher than average share of employment in SMEs.
- Its existing vulnerability to Brexit (Highland is ranked 5 of 32 Scotland local authorities, and 70% of communities in Lochaber, Skye and Wester Ross at data zone level are within the 20% most vulnerable communities to Brexit in Scotland).

1.14 Tourism Baseline

1.14.1 Sustainable tourism is one the six economic sectors identified by the Scottish Government as growth sectors in its economic strategy. In 2019, sustainable tourism employed 19,000 people across the Highland and in 2018 the sector generated £320 million GVA[3].

1.14.2 The GVA generated by sustainable tourism in the Highland was around 7.7% of the value added by the sector in Scotland (£4.1 billion) and employment was 8.3% of total employment in the sector (229,000) in 2019. This alongside the analysis of the industrial structure in the region suggests that the tourism sector is relatively more important in Highland than on average in Scotland (see Table 15.13).

Table 15.13: Employment and GVA in Sustainable Tourism, 2019

	Highland	Scotland
Employment (Jobs)	19,000	229,000
GVA (£m)	£320	£4,141

Scottish Government

1.14.3 Tourism activity within the Highlands is seasonal, and much of it occurs within the months between April and September. For example, the occupancy levels for hotels in Highland and Islands are above 90% for the months between June and August, and below 55% between November and January[4]. The seasons are more pronounced in rural areas and this is reflected in closure of hotels during the winter period.

1.14.4 The Great Britain Day Visitor Survey[5] (GBDVS) provides national and regional data on domestic daily trips across the UK. Due to the smaller data samples at local level, the figures at local authority level are averages over the period 2017-2019. In 2019 there were 11.6 million domestic day trips in Highland, which was equivalent to around 8.2% of day trips taking place in Scotland. Day visitors spent £571 million in Highland, which was equivalent to around 9.9% of spend in Scotland resulting from day visits.

Table 15.14: Day Visit Trips to Highlands and Scotland, 2019

	Highland	Scotland
Trips	11,600,000	140,800,000
Spend (£m)	£571	£5,749

GBTS

1.14.5 The most popular activities for day visitors (VisitScotland, 2020) were:

- Going for a meal in a restaurant, café, hotel, pub (2.5 million day trips);
- Sightseeing on foot (1.5 million day trips); and
- Long walking, hiking or rambling (1.4 million day trips).

[3] Scottish Government (2021). Growth Sector Statistics
[4] VisitScotland (2019). Highland Factsheet 2019
[5] VisitBritain (2019). Great Britain Day Visitor Survey

1.14.6 The Great Britain Tourism Survey[6] (GBTS) provides a series of data on tourism across the UK, including overnight domestic trips. As with the GBDVS, data for 2019 are the average over the period 2017-2019. In 2019, there were over 1.9 million domestic overnight trips in Highland, accounting for 15.7% of domestic overnight visits taking place in Scotland. Overnight visitors to Highland spent £492 million, around 16.5% of the total spend in Scotland.

Table 15.15: Overnight Domestic Tourism in Highlands and Scotland, 2019

	Highland	Scotland
Trips	1,950,000	12,426,000
Spend (£m)	£492	£2,989

VisitScotland

1.14.7 Table 15.16 features overnight tourism data for international visitors (non-UK tourists) in 2019. In 2019, there were 459,000 trips from international visitors to the Highlands, 14.7% of total international visits to Scotland that year. International visitors spent £202 million in Highland, out of the total £2.5 billion spent in Scotland.

Table 15.16: Overnight International Tourism in Highlands and Scotland, 2019

	Highland	Scotland
Trips	459,000	3,460,000
Spend (£m)	£202	£2,538

VisitScotland

1.14.8 The most visited attractions in Highland by visitor numbers are displayed in Table15.17 below, as well as their respective distances from the Proposed Development. Each of the attractions is more than 100 km away from the Proposed Development.

Table 15.17: Top 5 Most Visited Attractions in Highlands, 2019

Attraction	Number of Visitors	Approximate Drivetime Distance from Proposed Development (km) (Invergarry)
Urquhart Castle	547,518	40 km
Glenfinnan Monument	462,235	60 km
Glencoe Visitor Centre	436,924	70 km
Glenmore Forest Park	427,791	110 km
Loch Ness by Jacobite	321,980	60 km to Dochgarroch and 12 km to Fort Augustus

VisitScotland

1.14.9 The Highlands are well equipped to serve tourists, and there are a significant number of visitor attractions and accommodation options available in the local area surrounding the Proposed Development. According to VisitScotland[7] there are four tourist attractions are within 15 km of the Proposed Development site and as a result were included in the tourist provider survey:

- Caledonian Canal Heritage Centre;
- Iceberg Glassblowing Studio;
- Invergarry and Fort Augustus Railway Museum; and
- Dundreggan Rewilding Centre.

1.14.10 The Caledonian Canal Heritage Centre is one of the most popular local visitor attractions, located in Fort Augustus and is around 2 km from the Proposed Development. Also in Fort Augustus, is the Iceberg around

[6] VisitBritain (2019) Great Britain Tourism Survey
[7] VisitScotland [ONLINE] (available at: http://www.visitscotland.com/). [last accessed 03 March 2023].

2 km to the south of the Proposed Development. The Invergarry and Fort Augustus Railway Museum is a museum based on the history of the Invergarry and Fort Augustus railway, it is a restored station near Lagan around 5 km from the Proposed Development. Invergarry, is accessed by the A87 trunk road, and Fort Augustus, which can be accessed by the A82 trunk road. Other smaller settlements, rural communities and clusters of properties are present along the route. Both the A82 and A87 are highly trafficked and popular tourist routes. The A82 provides the main trunk road between Glasgow and Inverness and provides access to several popular tourist spots such as Loch Lomond, Glen Coe, Fort William, the Great Glen and Loch Ness, whilst the A87 provides a road link to Skye from the mainland.

1.14.11 There are two hotels in Invergarry, as well as a youth hostel and several B&Bs and self-catering holiday properties. Other facilities in Invergarry include a shinty club, a post office, a primary school and the Glengarry Community Hall, which includes public toilets, a café, a community hall and the Glen Garry Heritage Centre. Other local visitor attractions and activities near Invergarry include the Faichemard Farm Caravan and Camping and recreational attractions at the forestry at White Bridge, as well as a variety of walks, climbing, other outdoor activities, cultural and nature-based attractions. The River Garry, which runs through the forestry at White Bridge, is a popular location for canoeists, due to the scheduled water releases from the nearby dam.

1.14.12 Other local visitor attractions and activities near Fort Augustus include the Kytra Loch Campsite, the Bridge of Oich and facilities at the FLS recreational area at Torr Dhuin, as well as a variety of walks, climbing, other outdoor activities, cultural and nature-based attractions. The village of Fort Augustus is a popular tourist destination which has a parking area for touring buses, a Golf Club and a viewpoint for looking over Loch Ness, as well as several hotels, cafes, restaurants and souvenir shops. Other facilities include a petrol station, supermarket, bank, village hall and a combined nursery, primary and secondary school.

1.14.13 According to VisitScotland[8] the majority (64%) of all tourists who visited the Highlands travelled by road. This indicates that key road networks into the Highlands, such as the A82 and the Great Glen, are travelled by a significant number of tourists. VisitScotland cites a positive driving experience, including clear road sign provision and avoiding negative impacts on scenery visible from the road, as important to ensuring a good visitor experience for tourists.

1.14.14 One designated scenic tourist route (the Great Glen) has been identified within 2 km of the Proposed Development and is promoted by VisitScotland. This route follows the A82 from Fort William in the southwest to Inverness in the northeast and largely follows the route of the Caledonian Canal, which links Loch Linnhe, Loch Lochy, Loch Oich and Loch Ness. It is around 130 km in length.

1.15 Local Recreational Baseline

1.15.1 The Land Reform (Scotland) Act 2003 (the Act)[9] translated into statute what is commonly known in Scotland as the 'right to roam'. The Act sets out public statutory access rights to most land and inland water for the purposes of recreation, education and access and requires local authorities to uphold these access rights. This is supported by the Scottish Outdoor Access Code[10].

1.15.2 Local authorities also have the duty, under the Countryside (Scotland) Act 1967[11], to protect and keep open any public Right of Way (RoW) within their area. These RoWs exist separately from the access rights set out under the Land Reform (Scotland) Act 2003.

1.15.3 Part 1 of the Land Reform (Scotland) Act 2003 makes it a statutory duty for local authorities to create a plan for a network of paths that is 'sufficient for the purpose of giving the public reasonable access throughout their area'.

---

[8] VisitScotland (2016). Travel and Transport Statistics
[9] Scottish Government (2003). Land Reform Act
[10] Scottish Parliament (2003). Land Reform (Scotland) Act 2003
[11] Countryside Commission for Scotland (1967). Countryside (Scotland) Act 1967

1.15.4 There are a number of notable routes and paths near the Proposed Development, these being The Great Glen Way (around 1 km from the Proposed Development) and SUSTRANs Cycle Route 78, also around 1 km from the Proposed Development. There are other public paths, Scottish hill tracks and mountain routes in the vicinity of the Proposed Development. Further away from the Proposed Development are a range of other notable routes, including the Loch Ness 360, South Loch Ness Trail, The Caledonian Trail and the Great Glen Canoe Trail. These are further away but are also popular and promoted routes which are becoming increasingly popular amongst outdoor enthusiasts.

1.15.5 Hill walking activities are also known to occur on nearby peaks. There are two peaks within 15 km of the Proposed Development that are Munros (mountains with summits in excess of 3000 ft), which are a popular type of peak with hill walkers. The nearest Munro is Sron a Choire Ghairbh (3,075 ft), which is located approximately 10 km south of the Proposed Development. Although it is difficult to quantify the number of people visiting individual peaks, members of Walkhighlands.co.uk[12] have recorded 5,081 ascents of Sron a Choire Ghairbh; making it the 159th most scaled Munro (from 282) amongst site members. Meall na Teanga (3,012 ft) is around 15 km south of the Proposed Development. Members have recorded 4,963 ascents of Meall na Teanga; making it the 165th most scaled Munro (from 282) amongst site members. These figures indicate that both Munros are climbed on a relatively infrequent basis when compared with other Munros.

1.15.6 The closest Corbett (mountains with summits of 2500 - 3000 ft) are Ben Tee (2,965 ft), which is located around 10 km from the Proposed Development. Although it is difficult to quantify the number of people visiting individual peaks, members have recorded 821 ascents of Ben Tee; making it the 97th most scaled Corbett (from 222) amongst site members.

1.15.7 The upland moorland areas surrounding Loch Lundie and adjacent to the forestry area at White Bridge, are owned by Aberchalder Estate. The estate is managed for sporting activities, including red deer stalking and trout and salmon fishing. The estate also offers other recreational activities such as highland safaris, canoeing and clay pigeon shooting and has several self-catering holiday properties available for let.

[12] Walkhighlands [ONLINE] (available at: https://www.walkhighlands.co.uk/). [last accessed 03 March 2023].