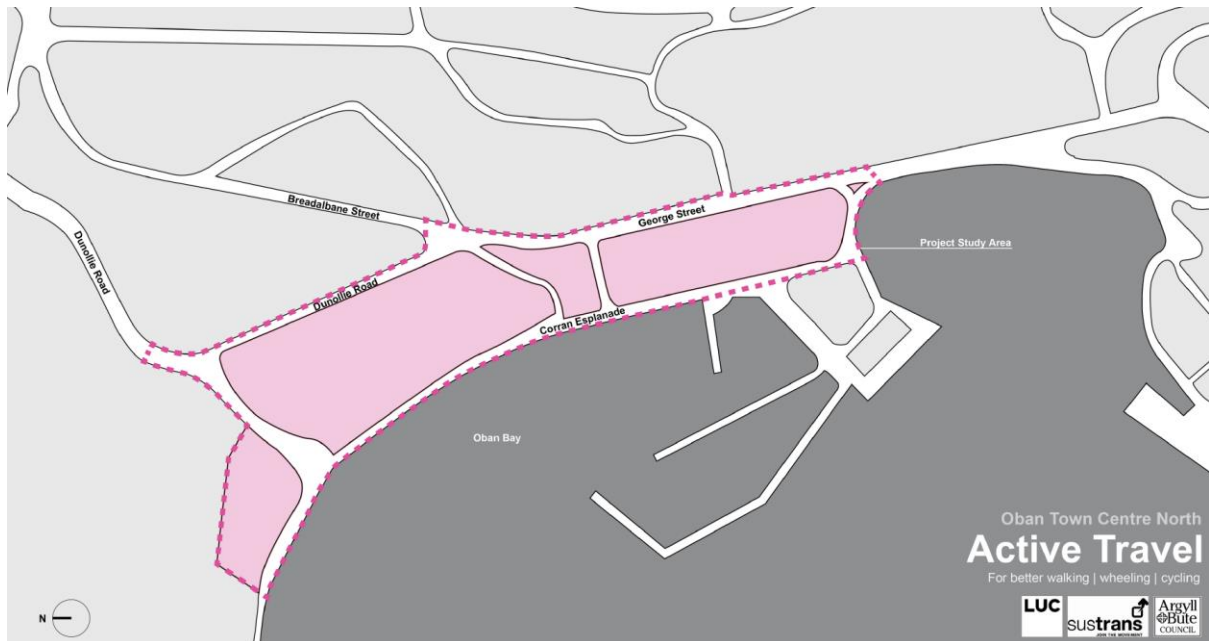


Oban Town Centre North Active Travel Project – FAQs

What is the study area?

The study area includes Corran Esplanade, George Street and Dunollie Road.



What is the project?

The project is to explore opportunities for new active travel improvements in Oban's northern town centre. We are in the very early stages and no elements are set in stone yet.

The purpose of this stage of the project is to develop **Concept Designs** which set out the overall design principles for the area. There would be several further design stages, each getting more detailed and subject to further consultation prior to any building works taking place.

What is Active Travel?

Active travel refers to walking, cycling, or wheeling (wheeling refers to use of wheelchairs and mobility scooters).

What has been done so far?

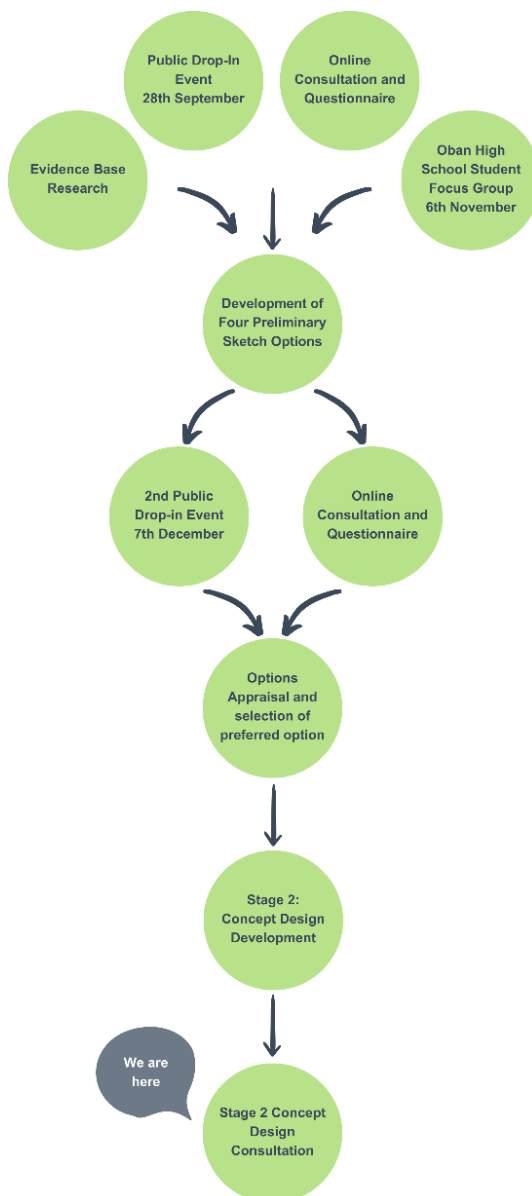
We started by undertaking a thorough evidence gathering exercise. We did 7 days of survey (7am-7pm per day) during August 2023 of parking, traffic, speed and cycle numbers. Parking surveys included counts every 30 minutes between 7am and 7pm on all streets and car parks in or immediately bordering the project area.

We hosted some initial public consultation events, before developing any design options, to fully understand the area's constraints, opportunities and needs.

We then developed four preliminary sketch options for appraisal. We considered what could be done within the town centre both in terms of available space, and considering the area's needs in terms of the A85 traffic, parking, and loading. We developed a range of four options to consider intervention levels from 'light touch' improvements to more extensive works:

- **Approach 1:** Formalising and creating minimum 2m footways. Reducing carriageway widths to minimum 4m. Retaining the formal parking throughout and removing the provision for informal yellow line parking.
- **Approach 2:** builds on Approach 1, but including green infrastructure, space for seating and cycle facilities. To enable these, minor localised reduction of parking and a new loading strategy would be required.
- **Approach 3A:** A cantilever/made ground to widen Corran Esplanade, which enables: 1-way traffic and 2-way cycle lane on Corran Esplanade. Approaches 3A and 3B are the most costly and subject to significant funding.
- **Approach 3B:** A cantilever/made ground to widen Corran Esplanade, which enables: 2-way traffic on Corran Esplanade and pedestrianisation or controlled access to George St. Approaches 3A and 3B are the most costly and subject to significant funding.

We needed to develop this wide range of options to ensure that we are not excluding a potential approach without fully considering it.



These options were then subject to an appraisal, weighing up the benefits, disbenefits, public and stakeholder feedback, of each approach to arrive at a preferred approach.

What option is being progressed?

Approach 3A was considered to provide the greatest overall benefit for the area, however sourcing funding for this more extensive scheme is very uncertain. Approach 2 was considered to provide a high level of benefit for a significantly lower scheme cost. Unlike Approach 1, it also enables a scheme that could be future proofed to an extent to allow for Approach 3A to come forward should funding be secured at a later date.

On balance, the preferred approach is to progress Approach 2 to Concept Design Stage. Concept Designs will deliver a scheme that works in itself but without prohibiting future expansion to 3A should funding become available.

Where can I view what has been done so far?

You can view the Concept Design at our Virtual Consultation Room here:

<https://oban-town-centre-north-active-travel.co.uk/>

When is the next consultation?

We held a public drop-in event at the Rockfield Centre on 14th March 2024. You can view and comment on plans that were presented in the Virtual Consultation Room until 5th April 2024:

<https://oban-town-centre-north-active-travel.co.uk/>

I don't want to lose on-street parking or loading

The Concept Design provides enough parking to meet the surveyed demand during the peak summer months.

We have done parking surveys between 7am and 7pm, for 7 days during August 2023. We understand the pressures that the area faces during peak times, and we want to make the study area function more efficiently without simply removing parking capacity.

A key objective of this project is to safeguard Oban's strategic transport facilities (i.e. the A85 and ferry terminal, and business operations). Removal of all parking would be contrary to this objective and we want to deliver a scheme that works for Oban.

The Concept Designs provide an overall parking level that meets surveyed demand during the peak summer months. However, the project will seek to prevent the ongoing issues of unlawful parking along George Street's western side. The project will also seek to prioritise street space for essential parking first and foremost (e.g. disabled bays, loading, short-stay, residential). Longer-stay visitor parking would be encouraged to take place in off-street car parks.

Are you proposing a multi-storey car park at Corran Halls?

We are not proposing a multi-storey car park.

This scheme needs to work independently, regardless of whether a multi-storey car park comes forward in the future. From our consultation so far, we have had some feedback from people in favour of a multi-storey to provide more off-street parking, whilst some are against the idea.

The option to provide a multi-storey car park is not part of this scheme. This is an active travel and not a parking project. However, we acknowledge the benefits that additional off-street parking could bring to this Active Travel project, as it would reduce demand for on-street parking and allow extra

space for seating, planting and pavement. We have therefore developed the Concept Design to be future-proofed, in case the Council wishes to progress a multi-storey option in the future.

This is the first I've heard about this project

We held public consultation events on 28th September 2023, 7th December 2023, and 14th March 2024. Each of these were accompanied by online consultation material and surveys.

We advertised these through our network of stakeholders and posters displayed in the town.

You can view and comment on the latest online consultation until 5th April 2024 here:

<https://oban-town-centre-north-active-travel.co.uk/>

My business did not hear about the business event on 29th February 2024

Only businesses within or immediately bordering the study area were invited. This is because they would be most directly impacted by the project.

We attempted to hand deliver leaflets to each business in the study area on the 24th and 25th January 2024. If they were closed, we posted a leaflet through their letter box. In some cases, businesses were closed and did not have a visible letter box so they may not have received a paper leaflet.

When will it be built?

We have funding to bring the project to Concept Design stage, following which further funding will be sought to develop designs further. There is no set date when construction might start as it is subject to securing funding for developing detailed designs and construction. Additional public consultations will be held if funding is secured to allow the project to progress onto the developed design stage.

What are you going to build?

No elements are set in stone yet, but they are likely to include improvements to pavements, pedestrian crossings, cycle parking, greenery and seating. We are also exploring opportunities to improve vehicle flow through the northern roundabouts and incorporate better pedestrian crossings towards Corran Halls.

Who is funding this?

This project is funded by the Scottish Government through Transport Scotland and is administered by Sustrans. Sustrans are a walking and cycling charity. The funding is known as the 'Places for Everyone' programme which is for projects that make it easier to walk, cycle and wheel for everyday journeys.

The funding we have received can only be spent on projects that improve an area's walking, wheeling and cycling environment (wheeling refers to use of wheelchairs and mobility scooters). This external funding is for active travel projects and cannot be redirected for other works.

Who is delivering this?

Sustrans have awarded Argyll & Bute Council with funding to bring the project to Concept Design stage. LUC have been commissioned by Argyll and Bute Council to undertake this work. LUC are a multi-disciplinary planning, environmental, landscape architecture and transport consultancy.