Skye Cycle Way:
Bridge to Broadford Path

Landscape & Placemaking Strategy

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Strategy

Introduction :

This report has been prepared by Sweco for the Broadford and Strath Community Company to look at the opportunities for placemaking and landscape enhancements to support the proposed new active travel route.

The following report is a desk-based study that aims to provide some preliminary ideas that will form the basis of further discussion with the Client and local community to help to define the features that will be most valuable to the active travel route users. We have also reviewed the report on the collaborative design session held on Saturday the 19th of November 2022 and where possible incorporated suggestions from this consultation.

Placemaking can take various forms and aims to enhance the character of an area through the introduction of distinct features. In the context of an active travel route we see these taking form of a family of signs, seats, interpretation boards or way markers, new planting, artworks, and the introduction of play or interactive elements. These features can help with wayfinding and form a network of elements that will link the route together. To help to identify the types of features that will be most effective along the route we have included a series of images to illustrate different features and generate ideas for the Skye cycleway.

On the following pages we have broken the route down into five sections, within each section we assigned an existing landscape route type, these are broad categories that identify the following;

- **Green Space:** The route predominately sits within an open natural landscape setting;
- **Woodland:** The route predominately sits within an area where tree and tree blocks dominate the boundary of the route;
- **Shared use street:** Where the route is on the existing carriageway;

At concept stage this broad categorisation helps us to define the types of treatment that would be appropriate and also the numbers of features that would be suitable.

The features proposed along the route have been broken down into Wayfinding, Bridge, Cycle Parking, Interpretation, Green infrastructure, Seating area, Gateway and Natural play. A brief description of each of these feature types is listed below and is further illustrated by the images shown at the end of the report;

- **Green Infrastructure:**
  This is likely to take the form of small scale interventions along the active travel route, hedging, foraging hedge, small scale tree planting and shrub planting where appropriate.

- **Natural Play**
  This takes the form of natural elements positioned within the landscape to create informal play for children. This will only be suitable for sections of the route that are remote from the main road. They can take the form of boulders, log stepping stones, tree trunks. These areas can also be accompanied by biodiversity enhancements and incorporate some of the other features noted in this section (seating, cycle parking and interpretation)

- **Cycle Parking:**
  At its simplest this could take the form of a timber post with a eyelet to secure a bike to or lean it against. This could also be a bank of racks and include a cycle repair station.

- **Gateway:**
  A feature that will define the beginning and end of the route or a key point along the route. This could take the form of an artwork feature that forms a physical gateway or be a combination of the previously described elements, tree planting, signage and seating. If a route brand image is developed this could be included as part of the gateway.

- **Interpretation:**
  Key areas of interest along the route can be supported by interpretation information included within a traditional lectern or added to seating elements or artworks. The information can be specific to a location or more generally relate to Skye and its ecology. Possible themes for interpretation are identified within the report however detailed discussion with relevant stakeholders and community representatives will be required to identify and expand on site specific local themes.

- **Seating area:**
  Individual bench or seat with a back, group of seats within a small area of hardstanding. Seating areas should be accessible to all and positioned to maximise key views. Depending on the location seating areas could incorporate shelter and drinking water points. Larger seating areas could also accommodate some of the other features listed – gateway features, wayfinding, interpretation, cycle parking and natural play.

- **Wayfinding:**
  This could take the form of a simple coloured post to define different routes or points of interest and also link back to interpretation board maps or literature. A multi-armed directional sign would also sit in this category. Directional information could be incorporated into artworks or incorporated into interpretation or seating. Route branding could also be included within these elements.

- **Bridge:**
  Existing or proposed bridge crossing. Bridge crossings can also provide an opportunity for interpretation and branding to create consistency throughout the built elements along the route.

Artworks have not been defined as an individual element within this report, however artist involvement in the development of features that will be specific to the Skye cycleway would be most beneficial in generating a strong sense of identity to the route. Route branding is explored through some images at the end of this report that illustrate how stand alone artworks or art incorporated with interpretation or signage can provide a route brand.

On the following pages a brief description of each route section is provided and possible locations have been identified for each of these elements or group of elements. These locations have been defined following study of the proposed route and review of aerial mapping of the area and site photography. The locations identified aim to highlight existing features or views and accommodate wayfinding at changes in direction. These are suggested locations at preliminary stage and will be refined following discussion with the Client group and local community.

As the design develops towards a detailed stage we will ensure that the proposals are inclusive for all, providing seating and features that are accessible to all. All elements should be accessible to all generations and wheelchair access should be accommodated at all seating locations.

The purpose of this document is to provide a high-level review of opportunities along the proposed active travel route, including types of feature and interpretation themes. This document provides a template for the discussion of placemaking elements which can then be designed in greater detail following consultation with the local community and during the detail design stage of the project.

Skulamus

**Lower
Breakish**

Ashaig

Lusa

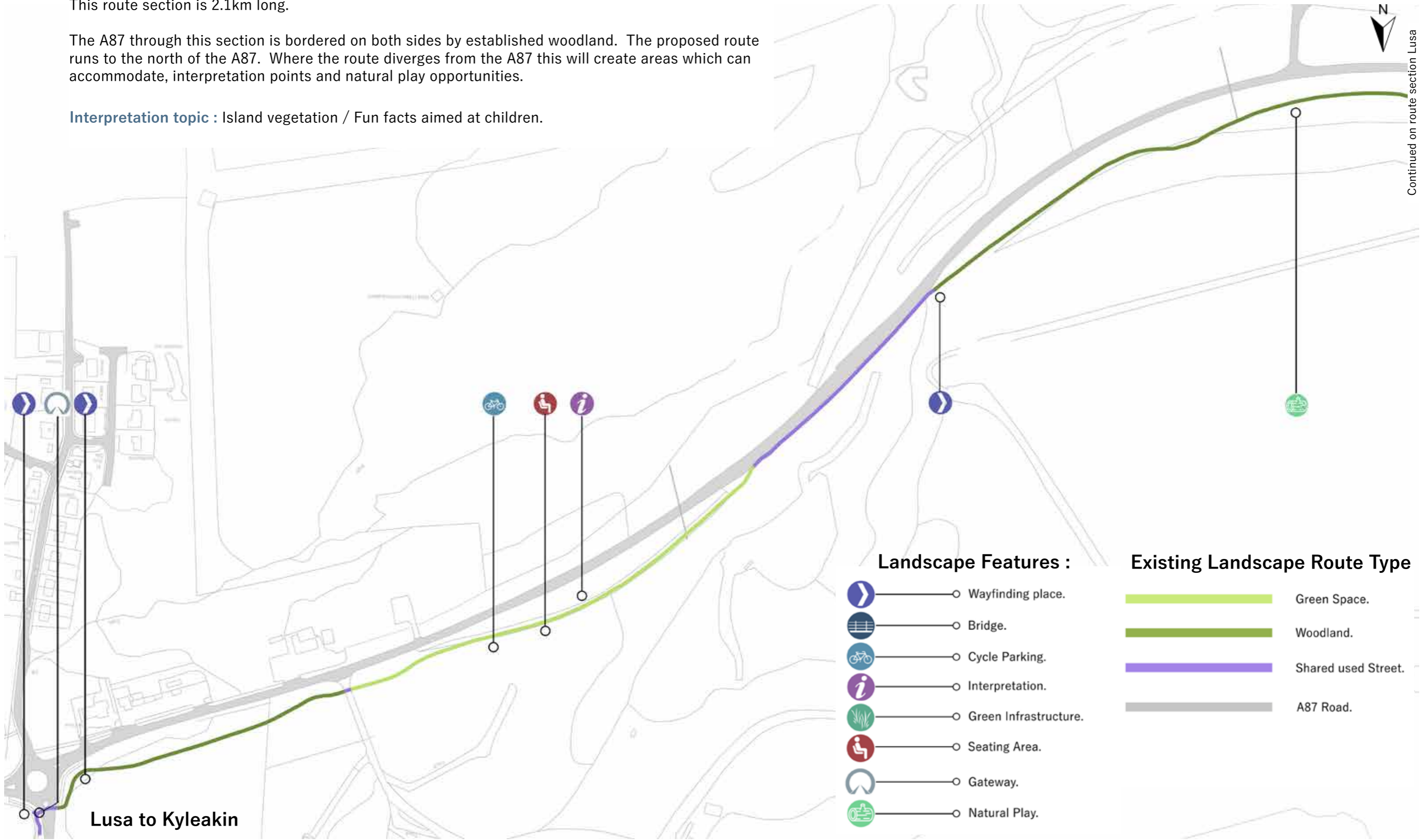**Lusa to Kyleakin**

LEGENDS :

Proposed Active Travel Route.

Lusa to Kyleakin Route Section:

This route section is 2.1km long.

The A87 through this section is bordered on both sides by established woodland. The proposed route runs to the north of the A87. Where the route diverges from the A87 this will create areas which can accommodate, interpretation points and natural play opportunities.

Interpretation topic : Island vegetation / Fun facts aimed at children.

Lusa to Kyleakin

Landscape Features :

- Wayfinding place.
- Bridge.
- Cycle Parking.
- Interpretation.
- Green Infrastructure.
- Seating Area.
- Gateway.
- Natural Play.

Existing Landscape Route Type

- Green Space.
- Woodland.
- Shared used Street.
- A87 Road.

Lusa Route Section:

This section of the route continues with open landscape views seaward towards the islands of Scalpay, Guillamon, Raasay, Longay, Pabay, Crowlin and the mainland (Kishorn, Applecross) beyond.

Opportunities for biodiversity enhancement can be explored where appropriate.

Sculptural elements could be used along this section of the route to create linkages and to provide a route identity, creating a feature within the context of the surrounding landscape.

Interpretation topic : Local History

Continued on route section Lusa to Kyleakin

Continued on route section Ashaig

Lusa

Landscape Features :

- Wayfinding place.
- Bridge.
- Cycle Parking.
- Interpretation.
- Green Infrastructure.
- Seating Area.
- Gateway.
- Natural Play.

Existing Landscape Route Type

- Green Space.
- Woodland.
- Shared used Street.
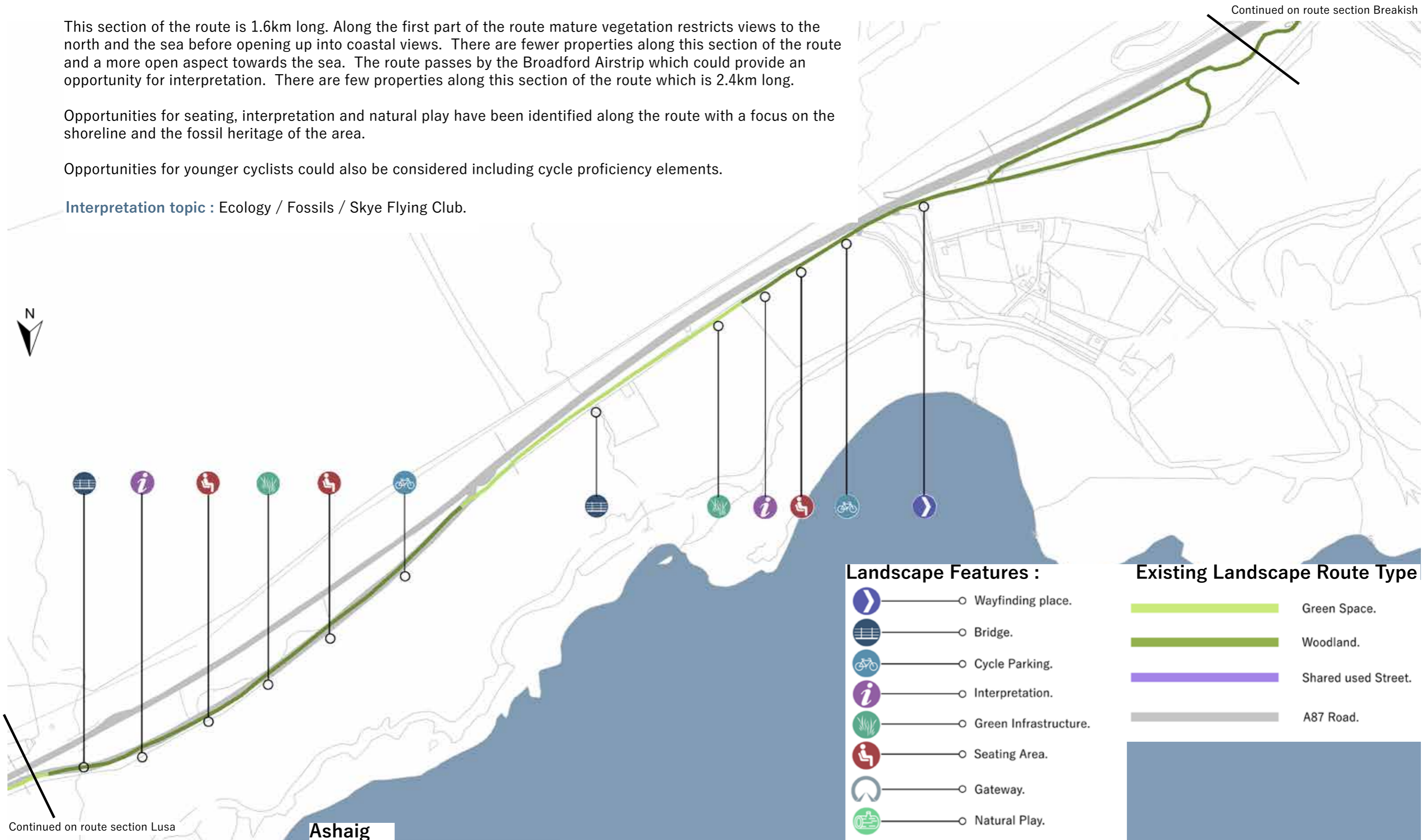- A87 Road.
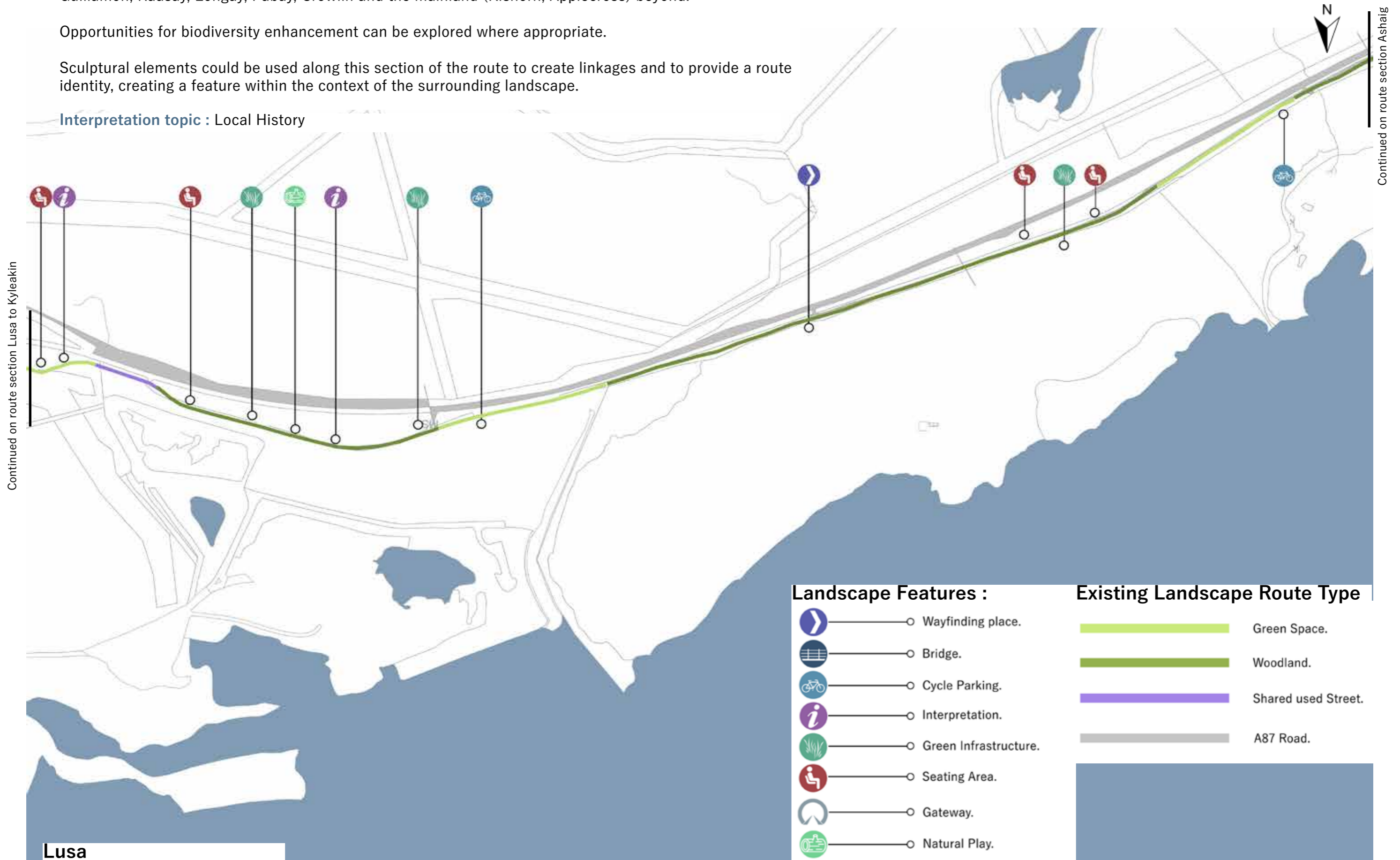
Aiseag Route Section:

In Gaelic, 'Aiseag' means "ferry", Aiseag is a small village adjacent to Upper and Lower Breakish.

This section of the route is 1.6km long. Along the first part of the route mature vegetation restricts views to the north and the sea before opening up into coastal views. There are fewer properties along this section of the route and a more open aspect towards the sea. The route passes by the Broadford Airstrip which could provide an opportunity for interpretation. There are few properties along this section of the route which is 2.4km long.

Opportunities for seating, interpretation and natural play have been identified along the route with a focus on the shoreline and the fossil heritage of the area.

Opportunities for younger cyclists could also be considered including cycle proficiency elements.

Interpretation topic : Ecology / Fossils / Skye Flying Club.

N

Ashaig

Landscape Features :

- Wayfinding place.
- Bridge.
- Cycle Parking.
- Interpretation.
- Green Infrastructure.
- Seating Area.
- Gateway.
- Natural Play.

Existing Landscape Route Type

- Green Space.
- Woodland.
- Shared used Street.
- A87 Road.

Lower Breakish Route Section :

This section of the route is 2km long and uses the single-track township 'Committee' road. It then continues east past scattered residential properties and businesses with sea views opening up to the north of the route. For this section of the route cyclists will be on the road and pedestrians on the footway. Field boundaries including post and wire fence and dilapidated dry stone walling define the edges of the existing road which the proposed path follows on its north side. To the north end of the active travel route it runs through Upper Breakish common grazings parallel to the A87 forming an off road section close to the Abhainn Ashik. A link to St Maerubha's well at Ashaig Cemetery in the form of interpretation or waymarker could be included.

Interpretation themes to be explored through this section of the route could include coastal ecology, development of settlements and history of the Highland Clearances.
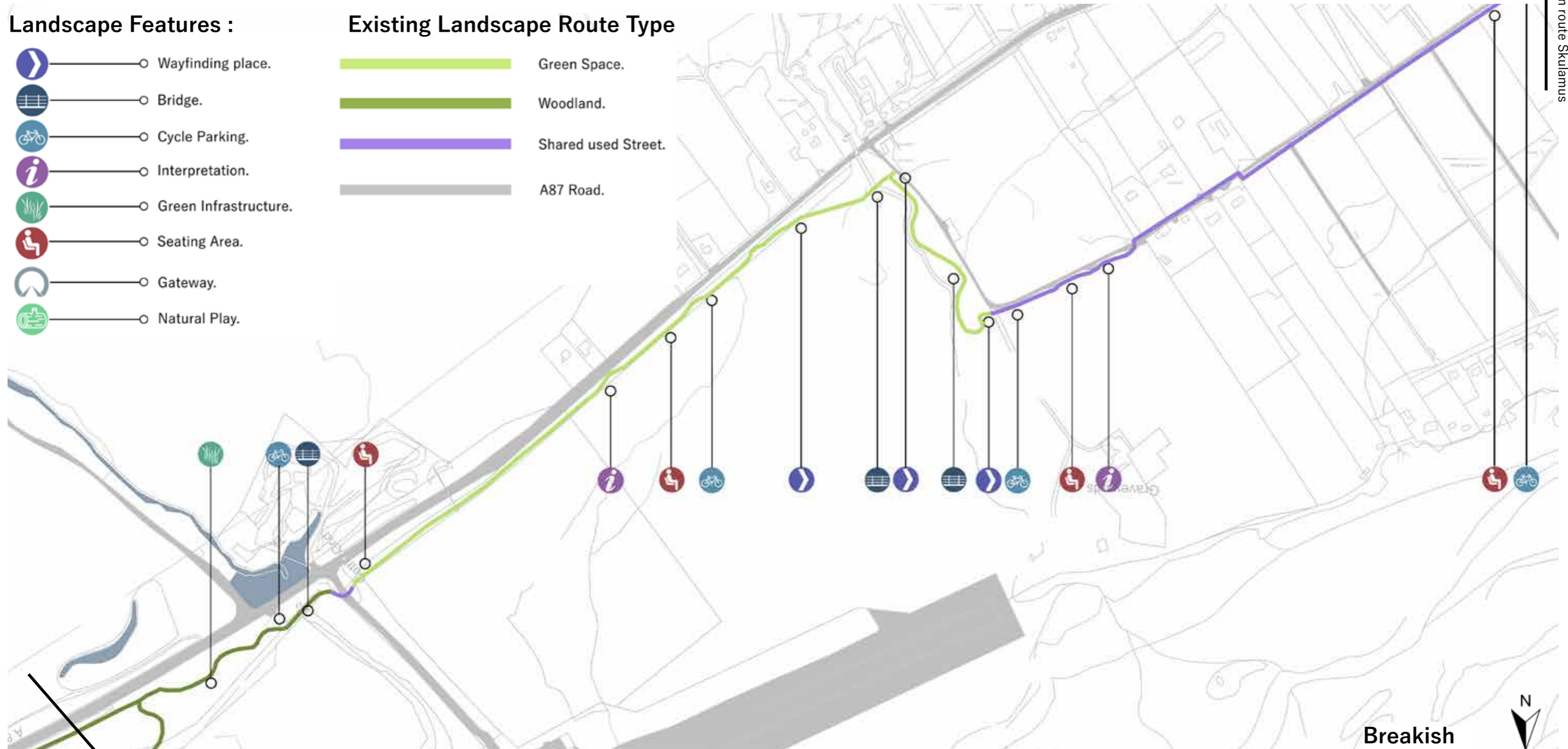
Interpretation topic : Coastal ecology / Highland Clearances / Cultural Heritage.

Landscape Features :

- Wayfinding place.
- Bridge.
- Cycle Parking.
- Interpretation.
- Green Infrastructure.
- Seating Area.
- Gateway.
- Natural Play.

Existing Landscape Route Type

- Green Space.
- Woodland.
- Shared used Street.
- A87 Road.

Continued on route Skulamus

Continued on route section Ashaig

Breakish

N

Skulamus Route Section :

Skulamus is a crofting township which lies close to the crofting townships of Waterloo and Harrapool. This section of the route is 2km long and contains three small burns running across the path. There are expansive views across the landscape punctuated by occasional properties. Mature trees line the route at certain locations and dilapidated drystone walling edges some of the route.

The active travel route will be located on the north side of the A87 trunk road, locations for seating areas and natural play will be explored along this route, where space allows.
Beinn na Caillich and the Broadford Red Hills are visible along the route and spaces have been shown on the map below which will capitalise on these views. The path deviates from the roadside for one section creating a flowing route through common grazings, this has the effect of slowing down cyclists as they follow this stretch of route. The undulating route also focusses attention on the surrounding landscape and provides opportunities for placemaking and seating.

Interpretation along this route could focus on Beinn na Caillich and the local ecology of the area. Another possible interpretation theme is fossils with the seafront settlement of Waterloo to the north of the route here providing good opportunities for fossil hunting.

Links to the Broadford Heritage Trail and the Cnoc a' Mhadaidh-ruaidh Trail could be included within map and directional information at each end of the route.

 Interpretation topic : Beinn na Caillich and Local Ecology / Fossils.

Skulamus

Continued on route section Breakish

Landscape Features :

- Wayfinding place.
- Bridge.
- Cycle Parking.
- Interpretation.
- Green Infrastructure.
- Seating Area.
- Gateway.
- Natural Play.

Existing Landscape Route Type

- Green Space.
- Woodland.
- Shared used Street.
- A87 Road.

Green Infrastructure Examples :

Natural Play Examples :

Cycle Parking Examples :

Gateway Examples :

Interpretation Examples :

Interpretation Examples :

Seating Area Examples :
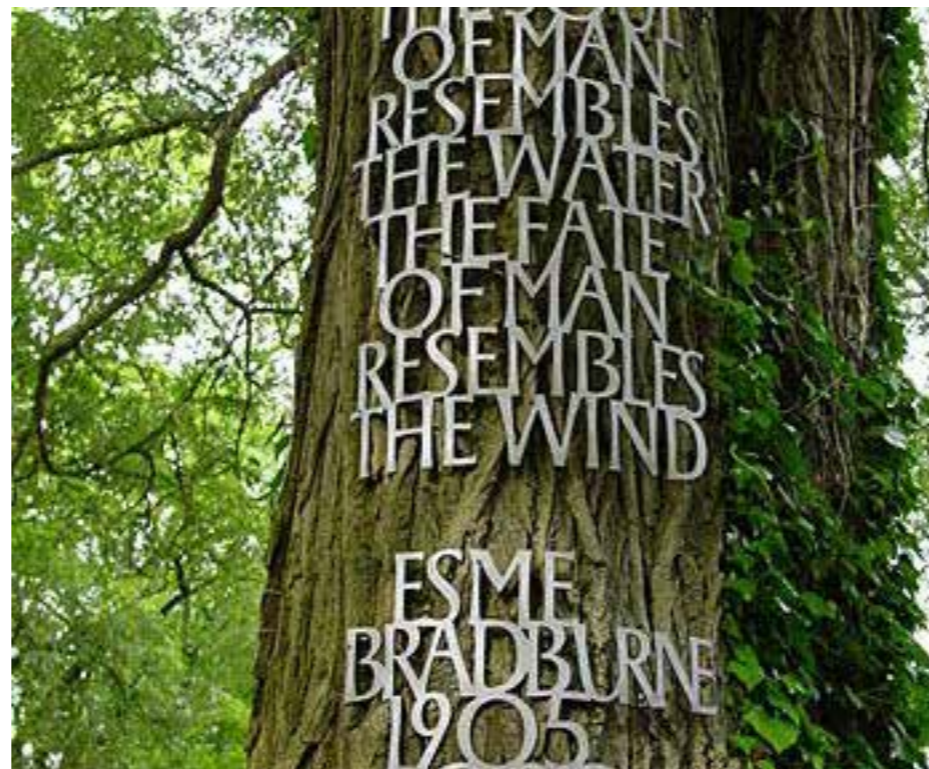
Wayfinding & Placemaking Examples :

Route Branding Examples :