

Publication name	Press and Journal
Date of publication	8 February 2011
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Battle over Loch Ness attractions set to continue at open day family-run centre to unveil £2m rival plan to that of jacobite cruises

The monster battle between two companies vying for tourists on the most famous loch in the world will continue at an open day this week.

Rival businesses want to build multimillion-pound tourism attractions on neighbouring sites on Loch Ness-side. At the centre of the planning battle are Loch Ness Centre and Exhibition at Drumnadrochit and adjacent business Jacobite Discovery Project.

Bosses at the centre want to extend its existing facilities and spend £2million on enhancing access, retail, catering and parking facilities.

The other project is the brainchild of Jacobite Cruises, which organises boat trips along the Caledonian Canal. The company plans to develop across 4.4 acres to include a visitor centre at a cost of £2.8million.

The site to be developed by the centre is currently leased to Jacobite Cruises, which has already announced its intention to vacate it for its new development.

On Thursday, an open day will be held by brothers Robert and David Bremner, whose family run the Loch Ness Centre at Drumnadrochit, the existing harbour and adjoining land at Brackla, next to the Clansman Hotel.

Robert Bremner said: "Local elected representatives, community groups and business groups will get a first-hand look at the plans for the £2million expansion that will be an exciting addition to the tourism offer of Loch Ness, creating local job opportunities and long-term business opportunities for local operators."

The open day, which will be held at the Clansman Hotel from 1pm to 6pm, comes after bosses at Jacobite Cruises were left disappointed after their plans were recommended for approval, but deferred by Highland Council planning committee last month for a site visit to take place.

It is envisaged a site visit will take place to look at both sites and then for the plans to be viewed side by side before the next planning meeting on March 1.

Highland Council planning manager David Polson said: "We are having difficulty in fitting in an extra committee meeting because of council commitments. The next scheduled meeting on March 1 is looking very busy and we may not be able to fit in everything in one day. We may have to spill some business over and try and look for another date. We want to decide this as early as possible. We don't want to delay but we must be realistic."

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