

**THE HIGHLAND COUNCIL**

**INVERNESS, NAIRN, BADENOCH AND STRATHSPEY  
PLANNING APPLICATIONS COMMITTEE – 9<sup>th</sup> June 2009**

Agenda Item	
Report No	

**08/00594/OUTIN - Erection of house at Caiplich Farm, Abriachan  
Report by Area Planning and Building Standards Manager**

**SUMMARY**

Erection of house on land to the southwest of Caiplich Farm, Abriachan. The application is reported to committee as there are 5 objections.

**Applicant:** Mr S Basset

**Recommendation:** grant outline planning permission.

**Ward number:** 13 - Aird And Loch Ness

**1. PROPOSAL**

1.1 Erection of house in outline on land to the southwest of Caiplich Farm, Abriachan.

**2. PLANNING HISTORY**

2.1 Detailed planning permission was granted for a walkers' bothy consisting of the conversion of an existing barn to communal facilities and the erection of 6 bedrooms, 08/00589/FULIN.

**3. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION**

3.1 5 Letters of representation have been received. Members are advised that these letters are available for inspection within the case file at Inverness Area Office and will be available within the Members lounge before committee.

3.3 The main concerns of the objectors can be summarised as follows:

- Scale of the development given the existing consents for holiday accommodation at this location with an existing farmhouse while the farm appears to be let out for agricultural use. A number of smaller facilities along the route (Great Glen Way) more appropriate and would not compromise the landscape
- Upgrade of track would make further undesirable tourist related construction schemes inevitable at this location and is not the way to promote the Great Glen Way

#### **4. CONSULTATIONS**

- 4.1 **TEC Services (Roads):** This application should be considered in conjunction with application 08/00589/FULIN. It is noted that the existing access track is to be upgraded and improved to provide vehicular access for the proposed house. The track is also used by walkers to access the proposed bothy and its facilities. The track will be used by vehicles for servicing purposes. Recommends that passing places that are inter-visible be provided along the length of the access track and these should accord with the attached amended passing place schedule. Improvements are also required to the access bell mouth junction with the public road and these must comply with the standard schedule.
- 4.2 **Scottish Water:** There may be sufficient capacity to serve the water supply from the Glenconvinth Water Treatment Works.

#### **5. POLICY**

- 5.1 The following policies are relevant to the assessment of the proposal.

##### Highland Structure Plan

- G1 – Conformity with Strategy
- G2 – Design for Sustainability
- G4 – Community benefit and commitment
- H3 – Housing in the Countryside

##### Inverness Local Plan

- GP1 – Design Principles

- 5.2 The proposal also requires to be assessed against the following relevant Scottish Planning Policies (SPP); NPPG, and Planning Advice Notes PAN.

- SPP1 – The Planning System
- SPP3 – Planning for Housing
- SPP15 – Planning for Rural Development

#### **6. SUPPORTING INFORMATION FROM APPLICANT**

- 6.1 The farm extends to 55ha and has always grazed sheep (currently 150 ewes and lambs) and has later diversified into holiday lets with 2 croft style cottages to boost income. A third croft cottage has just been completed. The demand for short breaks along the Great Glen Way gave rise to the motel type units approved with application 08/00589/FULIN. The increased revenue will help to fund a more full-time position for resident caretakers and create more work for the area.

- 6.2 Applicants now in their 50's and wish to live at the farm in the fullness of time and although there is an existing farmhouse near the buildings this is occupied by the caretaker, who would extend her duties to service the bothy units and become a full-time manager rather than part-time. The proposed increase in width of the access track is to allow for fire tenders and will allow for easy and safe access to the proposed new house and farm buildings.
- 6.3 Have submitted a business plan to justify the expansion of the business.
- 6.4 Members are advised that the statement of support included with the application are available for inspection within the case file at Inverness area office and will be available within the Members lounge before committee.

## **7. PLANNING APPRAISAL**

- 7.1 **Determining issues** - Section 25 of the Town and Country Planning (Scotland) Act 1997 requires planning applications to be determined in accordance with the development plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise.
- 7.2 The proposal requires to be assessed against both the appropriate policies of the Development Plan, supplementary guidance and National Planning Policy and Guidelines as referred to in the Policy section. In particular, the proposal requires detailed assessment of the following fundamental issues:
- whether the principle of development is appropriate in terms of policy
  - whether the layout of development is appropriate
  - the impact on the amenity of the area and residents
  - other material issues raised by the objectors
- 7.3 **Policy** – The site lies within the Hinterland and therefore the house requires to be justified in terms of the Development Plan Policy Guidance on New Houses in the Countryside. The site is located within a farm extending to 55Ha although the land is rented out at the present moment and the existing farmhouse is used by an employee of the applicant in terms of the running of the holiday letting business. There are 3 other properties being used in relation to this business to the north of this existing farmhouse. With the consent for the conversion of an existing barn to communal facilities and the erection of 6 bedrooms this type of development requires a level of service on a daily basis rather than a weekly basis compared to the existing holiday homes. The employee will require the existing farmhouse on a more permanent basis and the applicant would not want to remove the tenant as a result. Given this intensification of use there would appear to be a need for a further house to allow the applicant to return to the area (they currently live in Guisachan Tomich). The need would satisfy the provisions for new houses associated with an existing rural business. To ensure it remains related to the business and not sold off from the business and the holding, a Section 75 Agreement is necessary.

- 7.4 Design and Layout – As an outline application there are no details of the design. An indicative layout has been submitted for the location of the house which is to the southwest of the existing farmhouse and barn. The nearest residence is to the east but this is located closer to the public road. The impact on their residential amenity will be limited.
- 7.5 Impact on Amenity - The location is such that it will not be intrusive in the landscape with woodland to the southwest and east, the more so given the distance from the public road to the south between Abriachan and Teavarran.
- 7.6 Infrastructure: There is an existing overgrown farm track leading to the public road to the south between Abriachan and Teavarran and this will be used instead of the existing access to the north of the site. It will be upgraded and widened to allow for a fire tender with passing places given its length. TECS Area Roads is satisfied with use of this access. Foulwater and surface water drainage can be accommodated within the site.
- 7.7 Issues Raised by Objectors – The objections to the house also related to the other application for the holiday accommodation. The cumulative impact of the development at this location is not detrimental to rural amenity as the house is located at a sufficient distance from the existing farmhouse and the new holiday accommodation. The upgrading of the disused existing farm track is acceptable and there is no amenity or road traffic safety reasons to resist this aspect of the proposal. Any further development in the area will be assessed on its own merits.

## 8. CONCLUSION

- 8.1 There is an existing farmhouse on the farm holding and it would be desirable to ensure it is used before the approval of any further houses. Given the scale of the expanded business the retention of the use of the house by an employee is necessary and this justifies the erection of a new house for the owner. To ensure this proposed house is not sold separately from the expanding business, a Section 75 Agreement is necessary.

### **RECOMMENDATION**

Subject to prior conclusion of a Section 75 Agreement to relate the house to the operation of the business **GRANT** outline planning permission subject to the following conditions:

1. A further application shall be made to the Planning Authority within 3 years of the date of this permission for the approval of reserved matters and no works shall be commenced on any part of the site until the permission of the Planning Authority has been granted in writing for such proposal. Reserved matters shall include the siting, design and external appearance of all buildings, the means of access thereto, and proposals for the landscaping of the site which includes the design and appearance of boundary enclosures.

Reason: The application is in outline and these are reserved matters.

2. The house hereby approved shall comprise traditional Highland proportions and not exceed 1½ storeys in height with a roof pitch of not less than 40°. The exterior finishes of the walls shall be a wet dash harl and shall be agreed with the Planning Authority and the roof shall be finished with natural slate unless otherwise agreed in writing. Where an upper floor is proposed, it shall be provided by means of traditionally proportioned dormer windows set into the roofspace clear of gables, ridge and walls.

Reason: In the interests of visual amenity.

3. Prior to the occupation of the house or completion of the house, whichever is the soonest, the vehicular access to the site shall be located, designed and constructed to the standards and specifications recommended by the Roads Authority in the attached schedule and to the satisfaction of the Planning Authority.

Reason: In the interests of road traffic safety.

4. The house for which planning permission is hereby approved shall not be occupied unless the means by which foulwater drainage is to be accommodated on site has been installed and completed to the satisfaction of the Planning Authority and thereafter so maintained. In the event of any change to the submitted design, no work will commence on site unless and until such details are submitted to and approved in writing by the Planning Authority and thereafter so installed.

Reason - In the interests of public health

5. The house for which planning permission is hereby approved shall not be occupied unless the surface water associated with the development including areas of hardstanding and the driveway, is installed and completed to the satisfaction of the Planning Authority and in accordance with SEPA's guidelines on SUDS. In the event of any change to the submitted design, no work will commence on site unless and until such details are submitted to and approved in writing by the Planning Authority and thereafter so installed.

Reason – In order to ensure the proper drainage of the site.

6. No construction work shall commence on site until evidence is exhibited to the Planning Authority that agreement has been reached by the applicant with Scottish Water for the provision of a water scheme to serve this development.

Reason: Required in the interests of public health and on the basis of current advice from Scottish Water.

Signature:

Designation:

Area Planning & Building Standards Manager

Author:

Keith Gibson. Principal Planner

Background Papers:

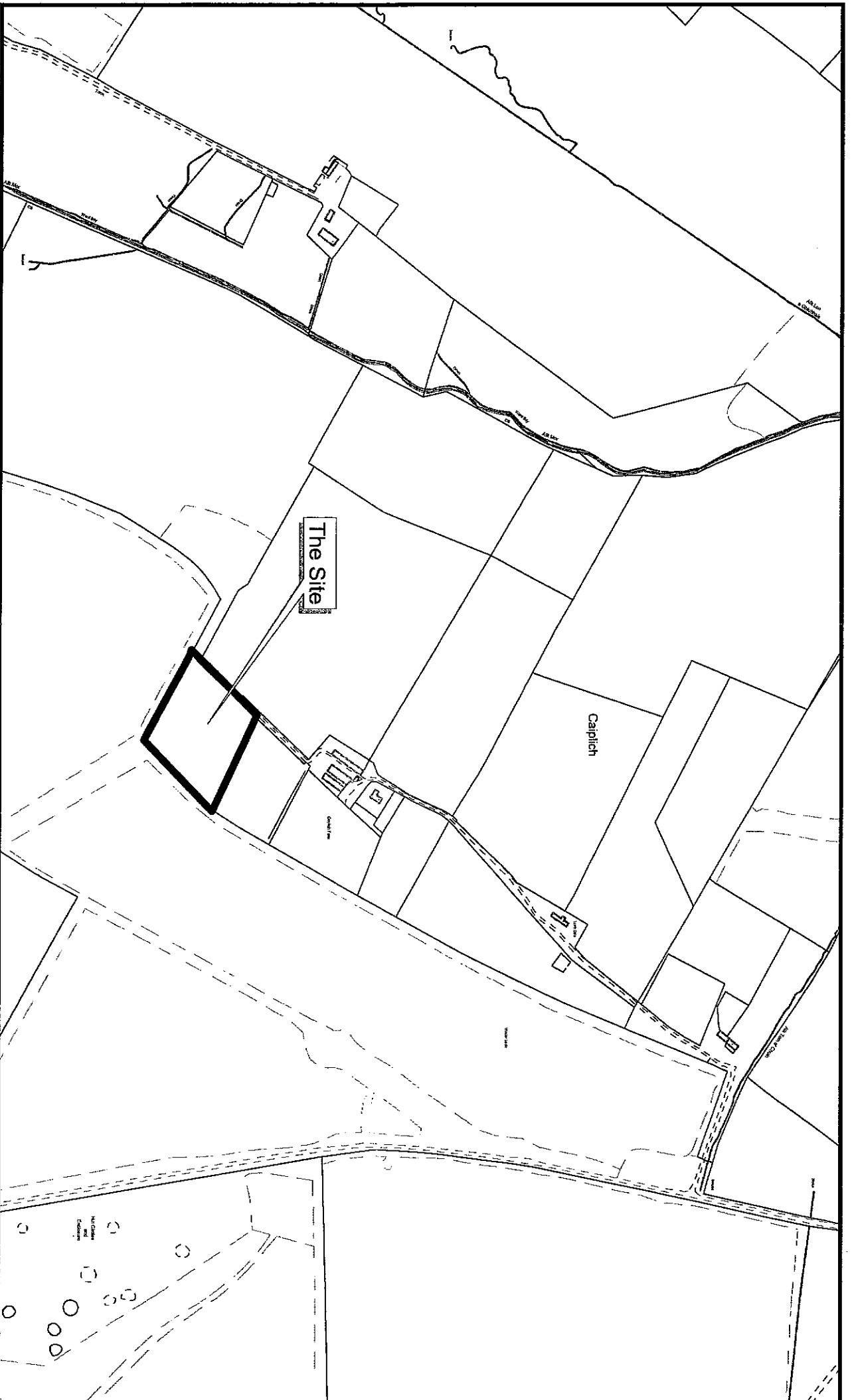
This casefile

Highland Structure Plan, March 2001

Inverness Local Plan, March 2006

Development Plan Policy Guidance on New

Houses in the Countryside, October 2006



**08/00594/OUTIN - Site Plan**  
**Erection of House at Caiplich Farm, Abriachan**  
**SUPPLIED BY THE HIGHLAND COUNCIL**

Reproduced from the Ordnance Survey Mapping with the permission of the Controller of Her Majesty's Stationery Office. © Crown Copyright.  
 Unauthorised reproduction infringes Crown Copyright and may lead to prosecution or civil proceedings. The Highland Council 100023369.

N  
 Scale  
 1:5000