

Highland wide Local Development Plan - Main Issues Report Consultation Summary and Actions Sheet

Reference Number:	HWLDP-MIR-257
Organisation/Individual:	Roger Piercy

Action:

Immediate Response Required	
Meeting required with Respondent	
Issue for Area Local Development Plan	
Further Information Required	
Other (Please Specify)	

If no box ticked - issues raised will be dealt with in preparation of the Proposed Plan.

Issues Raised in Response:

Purpose of Main Issues Report	
NPF2 for Scotland	
Vision for the Highlands	
Inverness and A96	x
The A96 Corridor	x
Phasing of Development	x
Developer Contributions	x
East Inverness	
Nairn	x
Tornagrain	x
Smaller Settlements in A96	
Caithness and North Sutherland	x
Easter Ross and Nigg	x
Development of Local Centres	x
Wider Countryside and Fragile Areas	x
Population and Housing	x
Housing in the Countryside	x
Affordable Housing	x
Planning for an Ageing Population	x
Gypsies/Travellers	
Retailing	x
Developer Contributions	x
Natural, Built and Cultural Heritage	x

Previously used Land	x
Wild Land	x
Water Environment	x
Renewable Energy	x
Flooding	x
Waste Management	
Air Quality	
Sustainable Design	x
Business and Industrial Land	x
Accessibility and Transport	x
Agricultural Land	x
Subdivision of Existing Crofts	x
Allocation of Inbye Land	
New Crofting Township	
Small Scale New Crofts	
Coastal Development	
Forestry and Woodland	
Minerals	x
Open Space and Physical Activity	x
Access to the Outdoors	x
Comments on Consultation Process (+ve)	
Comments on Consultation Process (-ve)	

Key:

Background	Spatial Strategy	Policy Options	Consultation
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Notes:

<p>Transport facilities/infrastructure should be improved at an early stage</p> <p>Preference for the dispersed growth option</p> <p>Developer contributions can be misused and abused</p> <p>Nairn bypass must be top priority</p> <p>Rail links need to be promoted more widely</p> <p>Black Isle should not be considered to have any potential for housing development</p> <p>Lower projection rate should be used</p> <p>Support for alternative 1 for Housing in the Countryside</p> <p>Must be clearer definition and explanation of affordable housing</p> <p>Infrastructure must be in place for renewables</p> <p>Should extend protection of agricultural land beyond prime</p> <p>All approaches need to be enforced</p> <p>More emphasis on tourism</p>
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Action Sheet Completed by:	SH
Date:	11/12/09

Dawn Sutherland

From: Simon Hindson on behalf of devplans
Sent: 06 November 2009 16:06
To: Dawn Sutherland
Subject: FW: Highland wide Local Development Plan response

From: Roger Piercy [REDACTED]
Sent: 06 November 2009 15:50
To: devplans
Subject: Highland wide Local Development Plan response

For the attention of Simon Hindson,

I found this document to be a difficult one to follow and many of my responses to the questions will repeat my feelings and wishes to influence your thinking.

This is a personal response which has been tempered by my involvement with the Ferintosh Community Council with which I have been a part since its inception, apart from a couple of years absence. I am currently Chairman.

Question 1. I agree with the preferred option.

I have the following comments;

The transport facilities/infrastructure must be improved at a very early stage. The Inverness - Aberdeen rail line must be twin tracked and reference must be made to the introduction of a station at Dalcross which has already been agreed and this station must be developed in line with all the options for the Tornagrain area.

Question 2. I do not agree with the preferred option.

The questionnaire is poorly designed in that it does not accommodate the situation where you have offered 2 alternatives.

I agree with the first alternative but not the second.

I have the following comments;

I consider that all development should take place here. There should be none on the Black Isle which should be protected so that its tourist and agricultural potential can be maintained and preserved.

Any development north of the Cromarty Firth must be extremely selective and should only take place once the Far North Line has been upgraded so that it can accommodate extra services and provide more stations. The opening of Conon Station should be pursued with vigour and the opening of Evanton Station given serious consideration. On the subject of Conon Station lessons must be learnt that former railway land should be protected so that space can be provided for adequate car parking. The signaling is out of date and should be replaced and the twin track reinstated at Lentrane to help alleviate delays whilst late running trains, a frequent occurrence, travel through the excessively long single track section from Muir of Ord to Inverness.

Question 3. I do not agree with the preferred option, neither do I agree with the stated alternative.

I have the following comments;

I am unhappy with the concept of Developer Contributions as I don't fully understand them. My experience of small scale developer contributions in the Ferintosh Community Council (FCC) area is that they have been abused and misused and a surplus of inadequate children's swing parks have sprung up. Also, I am not convinced that Highland Council have the ability to control these Contributions. My understanding of the fiasco surrounding the ASDA application in Inverness is a case in point.

Question 4. - No comment

Question 5. I have the following comments;

Once again the document has left me thinking that the order of events is back to front. The Nairn by-pass has to be given the priority over everything else. Only when traffic can pass easily from one side of Nairn to the other will Developers feel happy that people moving from the new housing developments to the new industries will not be hampered by long distance traffic. To this end improvements of double tracking the rail line will help. If the railway is improved then there will be a brief respite for the centre of Nairn until the by-pass is built. By-passes must be designed with only 3 entry point, start, finish and middle. The Inverness distributor road is now a nonsense as it traverses too many roundabouts and is now passing through, not around, the housing developments, plus it doesn't go anywhere constructive.

09/11/2009

Question 6. I agree with the preferred option.

I have the following comments;

The Tornagrain development must be associated with the proposed new station at Dalcross with suitable park and ride facilities.

Question 7. I do not agree with the preferred option.

I have the following comments;

These communities should be left alone.

Question 8. I do not agree with the preferred option.

I have the following comments;

There is insufficient reference to rail links. We need improved track for higher speeds and higher axle loadings, we need fewer speed restrictions and better signalling. Highland Council must actively pursue these improvements.

Question 9. I do not agree with the preferred option.

I have the following comments;

The development of Nigg is acceptable. A rail link is essential. Pollution issues must be addressed and seriously pursued. The narrow connection between the two firths could mean that pollution would seriously affect the north side of the Black Isle.

Question 10.

I have the following comments;

The Black Isle should not be considered as having any potential for housing developments. By all means identify that it has an important role in providing for agricultural need and tourism but the transport and road infrastructure can not cope with any developments and money should be spent on better areas where housing and industry can be better concentrated and provided.

Question 11.

The above remarks cover my response. By all means encourage local services, shops, transport etc. All agricultural land must be protected from serious development.

Question 12. I do not agree with the preferred option.

I have the following comments;

The lower projection rate should be used. Once again I stress that the Black Isle is not considered as a source of housing land. There are serious drainage issues and inadequate roads and rather than spend vast sums of money improving the roads etc put the houses somewhere else. This is not nimbysism, it is plain commonsense.

Question 13. I do not agree with the preferred option. Alternative option 1 is preferable.

I have the following comments;

The provision of well designed houses that meet design criteria set by Highland Council and **strictly** enforced by the Planning Department is acceptable in corners of fields etc. Housing Trusts should be encouraged to get involved to ensure that suitably priced houses are available which are kept in their control. Strict guidelines must be set and enforced that determine what is meant by a small business that apparently requires a house for its management. Far too many examples of people requiring a house to look after a few bushes and hens is making a mockery of the whole system. Allowance should be made for families who have the ground to build accommodation for family as an extra house or to allow the parents to down-size by swapping properties with their children, so that their children are on hand to care for them in their infirmity.

Question 14. I do not agree with the preferred option. I prefer Option 2.

I have the following comments;

There must be a definition of "Affordable Housing" which is clearly understood by everyone. The word "affordable" is the problem. Why not call a spade a spade and call them "Council" or "Housing Association" houses, because that is basically what they are. It should be clear how this is to be funded and how these so-called cheap houses are retained for future generations of qualifying people. The houses should only be provided in places where there is suitable public transport and close to suitable employment. Someone who recognises that they need "affordable housing" is unlikely to be able to afford a car or cars, as family members are unlikely to work in the same area. The ratio of affordable to expensive houses has always been an issue with developers doing their best to circumnavigate the rules as we have discovered in Culbokie. By their very nature affordable houses tend to be high density so that the developer can get the same return for his investment in land area purchased. This type of property is not in keeping with the village environment prevalent on the Black Isle.

Question 15. I agree with the preferred option.

I have the following comments;

There was insufficient reference to care in the home. There needs to be a re-think by the National Government taxation policies to allow elderly people to down-size by selling their asset-rich property and enable them to make good use of their savings in purchasing care.

Question 16. No comment

Question 17.

I have the following comments;

Small rural communities should be able to be flexible in attracting suitable retail outlets into their community with appropriate supporting housing.

Question 18.

I have the following comments;

Developer contributions are an area with which I am most unhappy with, as I do not understand how it is supposed to work. My experience has been to do with small scale developments where "planning gain" has resulted in a multitude of children's swing parks within a relatively small area, and often totally inappropriate. I don't think this document shows that there has been clear enough thinking of how the Highland Council will be able to attract sufficient developer interest such that the developer is prepared to come up with sufficient funds to make useful contributions. The Developer will want to see the road/rail infrastructure that is useful enough for him to see that there is a pool of labour that he can make use of within easy distance of his industry. Also, given that the history of the Highlands has been to pay the developers to come to the area why is it going to suddenly change that the developers are going to fall over themselves to pay vast sums of money to contribute to the development of the area. The previous policy didn't work once the incoming industry realised just how expensive this area is in which to conduct business and they moved out leaving a large redundant and unsuitable work force for anyone else to make use of.

Question 19. I agree with the preferred option.

Question 20. I agree with the preferred option.

I have the following comments;

The re-use of previously used land must take precedence over agricultural land.

Question 21. I agree with the preferred option.

I have the following comments;

This is very important but it would be helpful to try and define what is meant by "wild". Some of us on the Black Isle would describe the moors and forest areas along the Mulbuie Ridge as wild.

Question 22. I agree with the preferred option.

I have the following comments;

Strict attention should be paid to ensuring that all bodies with a responsibility for water quality are talking to each other. The recent fiasco over the registration of septic tanks is a case in point. Scottish Water and Highland Council knew of the existence of virtually all septic tanks but SEPA decided that they would insist on a totally separate exercise to register them and made an absolute mess of the publicity regarding the deadline for free registration. This lack of co-operation must be prevented at all costs from happening again.

Question 23. I agree with the preferred option.

I have the following comments;

Once again this comes down to the infrastructure not being ready for the developments that you wish to influence. The pylons/undersea cables must be put in place as soon as possible. I would like to see on-shore wind farms being actively discouraged. The technology is not good enough and the Community Benefit that is supposed to be a 'reward' for having a windfarm in your locality is a mine field. I have experienced the nonsense surrounding the division of benefit amongst the neighbouring Community Councils surrounding the Fairburn windfarm where Scottish and Southern Energy clearly did not understand the first thing about how to handle such a complicated issue when there were at least 7 Community areas all influenced to lesser and greater degrees by the construction and visual aspects of the development. The Ferintosh Community Council area has one of the most visually affected views of this windfarm and do not receive any benefit for the 'final' 23 years of the wind farm's existence. All effort must be put into off-shore methods of generating electricity. Also, every new house built must have photo-voltaic cells fitted and wired into the National Grid. It must not be left to the householder to retro-fit these devices.

Question 24. I do not agree with the preferred option. I prefer the alternative.

I have the following comments;

Flooding risk must not be identified as something associated with rising sea-levels or rivers bursting their banks. There is a risk much closer to a lot of homes especially where there have been housing developments where the ground structure has been disturbed by unsympathetic excavation. Also, all new houses should be constructed with the absolute minimum of hard surfaces. Tared/concrete driveways must be banned as the run-off from the surfaces has to be channeled somewhere and, as in my own case, the flooding occurs downhill and causes occupants downhill to have to put in flood prevention methods.

Question 25. I agree with the preferred option.

Question 26. I agree with the preferred option.

Question 27. I agree with the preferred option.

I have the following comments;

It is vital that developers must work to a set of house/industrial buildings that conform to standards set by the Highland Council that meet this policy of sustainable design. All houses must be fitted with photo-voltaic cells connected to apparatus that 'sells' surplus electrical energy into the National Grid. I am not too bothered about water solar panels, but they must not be given priority over PV cells. If people want to heat their water then they should use the electricity from the PV cell or use the central heating system of their choice. Large scale developments should be designed with mass heating systems. As many surfaces as possible must be made to be permeable to rain water and where this is not possible the drainage system must be designed extremely carefully to ensure that properties downhill from the development are not unduly influenced (I speak from personal experience!) Grey water re-cycling systems should also be insisted on.

Question 28a. I agree with the preferred option.

I have the following comments;

Once again I would encourage you that the Black Isle is avoided at all costs at identifying large scale development. A strong definition of small scale rural business is required to prevent any doubt creeping in as to what qualifies when people are applying for houses in the countryside based on the so-called need of a small rural business, which basically is nothing more than a productive garden.

Question 28b. I agree with the preferred option.

I have the following comments;

This document has missed the opportunity of promoting rail has the highest priority in promoting the future expansion of the Highlands. The Council should pursue the providers of the rail services with the utmost urgency and I would draw your attention to the submission being made by the Friends of the Far North Line of which I am a long-term Committee member and whose campaigning has attracted favourable opinions from all the providers of rail services in Scotland. You will not attract the right sort of development in the appropriate places until you can demonstrate to potential developers that the infrastructure will provide for their requirements.

Question 29. I do not agree with the preferred option. I prefer the alternative.

I have the following comments;

You must extend protection beyond 'prime agricultural land'.

Question 30. I agree with the preferred option.

I have the following comments;

Some flexibility should be built in to allow for the provision of family members where the house is not available for sale on the open market for a considerable number of years, say when the ownership of the original croft changes hands. The house design and location within the croft must be strictly controlled. This will allow the younger generation to stay within their community and be in a position to care for their parents in the original croft house.

Question 31. No definite view.

Question 32. No definite view

Question 33. No definite view

Question 34. I agree with the preferred option.

Question 35. I agree with the preferred option.

I have the following comments;

Clear felling of woodland must be linked to suitable earthworks to control the extra run-off off precipitation.

Question 36. I do not agree with the preferred option. I prefer the alternative.

I have the following comments;

The identifying of sites for new quarries allows for up to date discussion on the siting of the quarries to ensure

that existing land use and neighbouring housing is protected.

Question 37. I agree with the preferred option.

I have the following comments;

It must not be left to the Developers to provide the green spaces - they must be told where the space will be provided and the Highland Council strictly enforce that instruction!

Question 38. I agree with the preferred option.

I have the following comments;

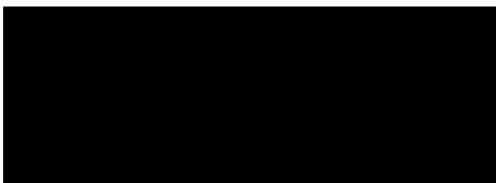
Somehow allotment type spaces should be created close to housing developments and placed under the control of Highland Council. It must not be left to the creation of volunteer groups within the new housing developments to look after this type of access to green spaces. Whilst dog walking areas have their place their are a very low priority.

General comments

1. Whilst I recognise that the subject of Enforcement for these new policies could not easily be built into the structure of this document the final document must be accompanied by a statement that Highland Council will, regardless of budget constraints, have in place sufficient people to enforce the conditions set by planners. This is abundantly lacking today, especially on the Black Isle.

2. I felt that there was insufficient emphasis on the recognition of the vital role that tourism plays throughout the Highlands.

3. There was insufficient acknowledgement of the need to encourage the development of rail to road freight handling facilities, for example at Inverness, Georgemas, Lairg, Kyle and Evanton. I appreciate that there are constraints on the size of containers that can reach Inverness and move further north and west but Highland Council should be seen to be encouraging the necessary improvement.



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