

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

Reference Number:	<b>HWLDP-MIR-20</b>
Organisation/Individual:	Mr Alan Findley

**Action:**

Immediate Response Required	x
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	
The A96 Corridor	
Phasing of Development	
Developer Contributions	
East Inverness	
Nairn	
Tornagraim	
Smaller Settlements in A96	
Caithness and North Sutherland	
Easter Ross and Nigg	
Development of Local Centres	
Wider Countryside and Fragile Areas	
Population and Housing	
Housing in the Countryside	
Affordable Housing	
Planning for an Ageing Population	
Gypsies/Travellers	
Retailing	
Developer Contributions	
Natural, Built and Cultural Heritage	

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

**Key:**

<b>Background</b>	<b>Spatial Strategy</b>	<b>Policy Options</b>	<b>Consultation</b>
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**Notes:**

Response to be copied to TEC Services for the Local Transport Strategy – Response to representor to state this.

Action Sheet Completed by:	SH
Date:	8/12/09

**Dawn Sutherland**

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**From:** Simon Hindson on behalf of devplans  
**Sent:** 29 September 2009 13:46  
**To:** Dawn Sutherland  
**Subject:** FW: Highland Local Plan - Accessibility & Transport

Dawn,

Can you log this as a response to the Highland wide Local Development Plan please.

I have acknowledged via e-mail

Simon Hindson  
Graduate Planner

Planning and Development Services  
The Highland Council  
Glenurquhart Road  
Inverness  
IV3 5NX

Telephone [REDACTED]

*Keep up to date with the progress on the Highland wide Local Development Plan - <http://hwldp.blogspot.com>*

-----Original Message-----

**From:** Alan Findlay [mailto:[REDACTED]]  
**Sent:** 29 September 2009 11:22  
**To:** devplans  
**Subject:** Highland Local Plan - Accessibility & Transport

Dear Sir/Madam,

I attach a response to 28B in your questionnaire relating to the Highland Wide Local Development Plan.

Yours faithfully,

**Alan Findlay, Rose Cottage, Dores, Inverness, IV2 6TR.**

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This email has been scanned by Netintelligence  
<http://www.netintelligence.com/email>

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## Highland Wide Local Development Plan

### Question 28B – Accessibility and Transport

I do not agree with your preferred option. Wisely, national policy emphasises the reduction of the need to travel, facilitating travel by public transport, encouraging freight movement by rail or water, and personal mobility by walking and cycling. It makes no specific reference to roads.

Your preferred option appears to make little reference to this national policy, other than ‘providing a clear link to... the Local Transport Strategy’, which does refer vaguely to ‘improving the pedestrian and cycle network’, ‘identifying the main public transport improvements required’ and ‘improving the rail, air and ferry routes in the area’, with reference to freight by rail and the Caledonian Canal.

Other than these pretty vague and sweeping references, your preferred option appears very road-biased, referring to specific roads in the Local Transport Strategy, promoting use of cleaner fuels – presumably by road vehicles – and a network of rural fuel stations. Park & Ride sites will still encourage road-use.

Road improvement obviously needs to continue at some level, but I am very concerned that this Local Plan for transport shows little sign of grasping the nettle of moving the Highlands away from its almost total road dependence – essential, if the area is to make a contribution to carbon emission reduction. Currently, although other spheres like industry, homes and energy generation are managing to cut CO2 emissions, the amount emitted by transport in the UK continues to increase.

While cleaner fuels and electrically-powered vehicles will ultimately help reduce CO2 emissions, planning for an ever-increasing number of individually-powered road vehicles is surely irresponsible and unsustainable – we need to CONSERVE energy, not plan to waste it in this way!

If Highland commerce and life in general are not to be hit soon by inevitable restrictions in road use due to energy costs and the need to cut carbon emissions, surely now is the time to plan much more robustly for weaning people off these wasteful modes of transport where possible, by developing more sustainable ones, such as rail (eventually electric) and water, and doing much more to encourage walking and cycling – with huge advantage to Highland health.

Referring particularly to rail, I am disappointed your plan makes no reference to specific improvements to the largely single-track lines between Inverness and Perth and Aberdeen. Increasing double-tracking and updating signalling, with ultimate electrification, would hugely increase capacity and speeds, reducing the need for wasteful and unsustainable expenditure on the A9 and A96.

North of Inverness, the Wick/Thurso line has been reduced to a slow, meandering irrelevance by huge improvements to the A9. North of Tain in particular, its roundabout nature and slow journey times, especially to Wick, are losing it passengers. Rail improvements such as a link via Dornoch to cut out the ‘Lairg loop’ for through traffic, a curve to enable direct access at Georgemas Junction to the Thurso line from the south, and a station to serve Halkirk are all desperately needed to inject

some life into this railway to ensure that it can play an increasing part in providing sustainable transport to the far north, especially in view of Dounreay's decommissioning.

In the same way, the Kyle and Fort William/Mallaig lines, not even shown on your map as 'for improvement' need to be developed as part of an integrated, sustainable public transport network, and for freight as well as passenger use – links with water transport can be developed further in both cases.

Surely we must start planning NOW to develop this shift away from unsustainable road transport wherever possible in the Highlands. It is unescapable that much of our area can only be served by road, so we must try to ensure that these roads are used wisely, and much more flexible and responsive road-based public transport will be necessary to encourage less car use.

To sum up, I don't think you have the balance right in your Preferred Option. It does not convey the urgency necessary in persuading a shift to more sustainable modes of transport.