

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

Reference Number:	HWLDP-MIR-276
Organisation/Individual:	RMT – Phil McGarry

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	
The A96 Corridor	
Phasing of Development	
Developer Contributions	
East Inverness	
Nairn	
Tornagrain	
Smaller Settlements in A96	
Caithness and North Sutherland	x
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:

Background	Spatial Strategy	Policy Options	Consultation
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Notes:

<p>Need more detail on rail Recognise significant passenger and freight benefits through implementation of Tain – Dornoch – Golspie rail link Maps should show route of rail link and crossing of Dornoch Firth</p>

Action Sheet Completed by:	SH
Date:	14/12/09

Dawn Sutherland

From: Isabel Collier I
Sent: 09 November 2009 16:40
To: devplans
Subject: RMT RESPONSE TO HIGHLAND COUNCIL DEVELOPMENT PLAN
Importance: High

FOR AND ON BEHALF OF PHIL McGARRY, REGIONAL ORGANISER, RMT

Dear Sir

Please find attached the RMT response to the Highland Council Development Plan. Kindly acknowledge receipt to the email address of Phil McGarry given below.

Regards

Phil

Phil McGarry
Regional Organiser
RMT
180 Hope Street
GLASGOW
G2 2UE

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

12/11/2009

9 November 2009

Director of Planning and Development
Highland Council
Glenurquhart Road
Inverness
IV3 5NX

Dear Sir

GENERAL OVERVIEW

I have examined the Highland wide Local Development Plan and find that your references to required and essential railway infrastructure improvements, particularly in regard to the Inverness-Thurso/Wick line, are skeletal, flimsy and fail to make the required commitment or contribution to encouraging creation of a modernised railway fit for the needs and requirements of the north Highland mainland and its Orkney ferry links.

In this respect I find it disturbing that the current Structure Plan document omits any of recognition of the very significant passenger and freight benefits which would accrue to the above communities through implementation of the promised Tain-Dornoch-Golspie rail link.

It is worth quoting your predecessor Highland Council Structure Plan Written Statement 1999, as modified 2000, by the Scottish Executive Minister, which emphasizes the significance of this rail issue:

'A considerable shortening of the journey time for rail passengers between Caithness/South East Sutherland and Inverness could be achieved by the construction of a direct link between Tain and Golspie, crossing the Dornoch Firth' (Infrastructure Section, Paragraph 2.16.15 as modified)

The professional opinion of the Corus/MVA Consultancy work, published January 2008, was that the magnitude of this 'considerable shortening' of the Caithness/South East Sutherland rail journey time to Inverness approximated to 45 minutes - a figure which has never been challenged by Highland Council.

Yet nowhere in your current 'Highland Wide Local Development Plan is this (potential) infrastructure improvement project given any mention in text or graphic/map form in relation to 'Caithness and North Sutherland' (pages 23 - 25) or in the 'Accessibility and Transport Section' (pages 60-62).

Total omission (by willful intent or carelessness?) of the Far North Rail Line to Caithness (page 23 map) seems depressingly indicative of lack of any real interest or concern over the role of rail to serve Caithness and the beneficial impact a significantly improved line could have to the post-Dounreay economy of this area. Why is there specific highlighting and emphasis of 'Dounreay' (and post-Dounreay nuclear employment) in Caithness yet without any indication

To remove the discriminatory and unfair bias against recognition of the value of a direct Dornoch Firth rail (very evident in this document) route it is suggested that two changes require to be made to the 'Accessibility and Transport' references (page 60). Bullet point three should make a *specific* reference, or acknowledgement to the potential beneficial role of a direct Dornoch Firth rail crossing in terms of 'increasing accessibility to our area'. Similarly bullet point 8 should make *specific* reference to the potential value of this rail infrastructure enhancement in terms of improving freight transport throughout the (Northern Highland) area.

Also, as discussed above, the map on page 61 should be amended to indicate the location of a potential Rail Link Crossing of the Dornoch Firth.

Yours sincerely

Phil McGarry

Regional Organiser (Scotland and N Ireland)
National Union of Rail Maritime & Transport Workers
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