

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

Reference Number:	HWLDP-MIR-174
Organisation/Individual:	Glenurquhart Community Council (David Fraser)

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		Previously used Land	
NPF2 for Scotland		Wild Land	
Vision for the Highlands		Water Environment	
Inverness and A96		Renewable Energy	x
The A96 Corridor		Flooding	x
Phasing of Development		Waste Management	x
Developer Contributions		Air Quality	
East Inverness		Sustainable Design	x
Nairn		Business and Industrial Land	
Tornagrain		Accessibility and Transport	x
Smaller Settlements in A96		Agricultural Land	x
Caithness and North Sutherland		Subdivision of Existing Crofts	
Easter Ross and Nigg		Allocation of Inbye Land	
Development of Local Centres		New Crofting Township	
Wider Countryside and Fragile Areas		Small Scale New Crofts	
Population and Housing		Coastal Development	
Housing in the Countryside		Forestry and Woodland	x
Affordable Housing		Minerals	
Planning for an Ageing Population		Open Space and Physical Activity	x
Gypsies/Travellers		Access to the Outdoors	x
Retailing		Comments on Consultation Process (+ve)	
Developer Contributions		Comments on Consultation Process (-ve)	
Natural, Built and Cultural Heritage			

Key:

Background	Spatial Strategy	Policy Options	Consultation
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Notes:

Too much emphasis on development – Areas such as Nairn/Inverness would benefit from additional policies to protect and promote Highland heritage in rural areas
 Practicality of policies – i.e. limited impact
 Broaden scope of crofting/agriculture policies
 Significant developments could be encouraged to make a direct contribution to the local heritage
 Detailed comments on specific questions on policy options as ticked above

Action Sheet Completed by:	GW
Date:	09/12/09

Dawn Sutherland

From: Simon Hindson on behalf of devplans
Sent: 04 November 2009 09:28
To: Dawn Sutherland
Subject: FW: Glen Urquhart Community Council - Response to Local Development Plan - Main Issues Report

Can you log and acknowledge please,

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: David Fraser [mailto:[REDACTED]]
Sent: 04 November 2009 09:12
To: devplans
Subject: Glen Urquhart Community Council - Response to Local Development Plan - Main Issues Report

Dear Sirs,

Please find attached the response from Glen Urquhart Community Council

Regards

David Fraser

Chairman

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

David Fraser
Glen Urquhart Community Council
Culcreuch
Pitkerrald Rd
Drumnadrochit
Inverness
IV63 6XD

4th November 2009.

Director of Planning & Development
The Highland Council
Freepost SCO 5568
Inverness
IV3 5BR

Dear Sir,

**Glen Urquhart Community Council
Response to Development Plan**

In responding to the Development Plan the Glen Urquhart Community Council wish to make a number of general comments as well as commenting upon specific sections of the Plan.

The Plan has, in our opinion, too much emphasis on development areas such as Inverness to Nairn and would benefit but additional policies that help to protect and promote the Highland heritage in rural areas. Not least we feel that the half page appendix "Suggested policy approach for development in the wider Countryside" should be expanded, after all it is the wider countryside that helps to make the Highlands a unique place to live and work.

We also feel that certain policies have very good intent but in practical terms they will have limited impact across much of the Highlands. In particular the Crofting and Agriculture policies covered by questions 29 to 33 would be supported by this Community Council. Unfortunately they would not apply to Glen Urquhart, nor indeed to the vast majority of highland communities due to the narrow definition of Category 1, 2 and 3.1 land as well as registered crofts. We would suggest the Council consider broadening the scope of the policies to take account of typical highland farm land and small holdings.

In terms of heritage the Plan protects the most obvious aspects of Highland culture however there is another level of community life that is far harder to define. It varies from area to area, it can be related to land use, culture and history, settlement patterns, support for elderly, sport, dialect etc. We would ask that Highland Council recognise that local culture is a valued part of our overall heritage and that development is likely to impact on that culture – as change always does. One suggestion is that significant developments (say over £500,000) are encouraged to make a direct contribution to the local heritage. This could be a fixed percentage of the development value, and administered at Ward level. If communities do not use the money within 5 years it

would be returned to the developer. This could help local communities to save important features and help protect and enhance our wide and diverse culture.

We would also recommend that Highland Council are explicit within this plan about working hours on new developments. We support the current arrangements that prevent Sunday working but feel these could come under pressure when / if the Beaully pylon line gets approved. By being explicit at this stage it will be easier to enforce conditions further down the line.

Specific comments are as follows – numbering as per your questionnaire.

Please note the Community Council has not debated every point in particular the issues around A96 development and therefore have made no comment on certain questions.

Q10 – We would support the policy that recognises towns like Fort William , Portree etc are equally important to the Highlands as Inverness. These towns need to be sustainable with jobs and homes that will help young people to remain in these areas, if they wish to, and help generate local wealth.

Q11 – Care needs to be taken in the transition area between hinterland and the wider countryside so as not to create a situation whereby vastly different policies apply on either side of a main road.

Q12 – We do not agree that the Council should be allocating land to address the highest rate of projected population and housing growth. This may have been necessary when local plans were in place for 10 years but with the 5 year turnaround we would suggest a median approach to the 5 year growth. This can usefully be set into the context of a 25 year vision – which may well look at different growth models. The problems with allocating too much land is that it can create false expectations and concerns within the community. It may also suggest that a site which has high development costs would be viable, whereas a more realistic approach would lead to alternative solutions being chosen. Nor do we think it is appropriate for every village to have high growth rates as the capacity for the village to accommodate the growth must be fully assessed.

Q13 – Housing in the Countryside. We would encourage Highland Council to develop good policies not only around the housing in the countryside but also associated issues such as roads, sensitive lighting and creating cycle ways and footpaths that allow safe access by non car users.

Q14 – Affordable Housing. Whilst we do not disagree with your preferred option we would suggest that this policy needs to be much more defined – what is a “significant backlog of need” that will mean the threshold for affordable housing will change from 10 to 4. How often is this assessed and will the affordable housing allocation policy ensure that those with the identified need get these houses, or will people from other areas get priority. Affordable housing itself needs to be looked at in terms of number of rooms in houses – it seems too many 1 or 2 bedroom houses are being built. Without jobs the provision of houses does not solve the issues of rural living , nor can you guarantee services / shops will follow – there are examples from the last five

years that demonstrate this and have added to the commuter traffic rather than making the village more self sustainable. Finally we would welcome innovative methods of affordable housing deliver that are not linked to 25% of a larger development especially in rural areas.

Q15 – Planning for an Ageing Population – we fully support this policy, our concern is where the money will come from to enable it to be delivered and will the support services be in place such a day care.

Q17 – agreed

Q18 – agreed

Q19 – heritage – agreed but see introductory comment also

Q20 – agreed

Q21 – agreed

Q22 – agreed

Q23 – Sustainable Development & Climate Change - at a high level we would endorse the policy but again much more detail is required. The Highlands are clearly seen as a natural resource for this type of development and there will be great pressure from developers and the government for a wide range of projects. Features such as wind farms can have a significant impact on how the Highlands will look in 10 years time and therefore we recommend strong well considered policies. There should also be provision made to ensure wind farm companies cannot leave the Highlands with a major liability should the farm come to the end of its useful life and no longer be required. Finally we would guard against comments such as supporting smaller developments for micro-renewables without some sort of caveat about the wider environment.

Q24 – flooding – agreed.

Q25 – Waste management – certainly an area Highland needs to develop and the concept seems acceptable

Q26 – agreed

Q27 – agreed

Q28a – Business & Industrial land (including tourism)

We fully support new investment, however this policy probably needs better definition “right location” “high quality tourism” “appropriate locations” are all relative terms. Our Community Council has seen various applications for around 60 chalets in the last 12 months and all claim to meet these terms. However it was very difficult to know if they did meet they do meet the appropriate criteria and does the standard apply to the build quality and architecture or merely the facilities e.g. number of en-suite rooms. We would also recommend protection against a new major investment which will only displace visitors and will harm existing businesses. If a new facility adds to the overall visitor experience then it brings benefits, just moving visitors around doesn't. We would therefore suggest some form of economic assessment is required to demonstrate overall improvement to an area. When

considering what area to take account of it will be necessary to look at where the new facility may attract people from. For example a major development at Foyers would have benefits to the south side of the loch but it may have negative impacts to the north shore (or visa versa) and therefore the impact assessment areas have to be appropriate to the scale of development. Smaller scale developments will have a more local impact but this should be taken account of when making an assessment.

Q28B – Transport Strategy. No real comment other than all the road improvements you have identified out with Inverness appear to be on trunk roads and therefore will not be funded by Highland Council. Also the only section of trunk road not identified as needing improvement is a short section to Wick. It may be worth trying to clarify priorities and review if any HC roads need improvement at a strategic level.

Q29 – Q33 – see introduction

Q34 – no comment

Q35 – forestry – no comment on the preferred option. However we have noted an issue whereby people sometimes cut down trees in advance of submitting a planning application as there are occasions when an over zealous protection of trees seems to take place. A difficult issue but without getting the right balance trees may be felled unnecessarily.

Q36 – no comment

Q37 & Q38 – Open space and access. In addition to thinking about people consideration should be given to wildlife as bad planning can result in loss of habitat and animals crossing roads (at risk to themselves and car drivers). Whilst encouraging general access we strongly recommend the promotion of responsible access and taking account of the needs of farmers etc.

Yours faithfully

David Fraser

Copies – Councillors Margaret Davidson, Hamish Wood, Helen Carmichael and Drew Hendry