

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

Reference Number:	HWLDP-MIR-52
Organisation/Individual:	Penny Edwards

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	x	Water Environment	
Inverness and A96		Renewable Energy	
The A96 Corridor		Flooding	
Phasing of Development		Waste Management	
Developer Contributions		Air Quality	
East Inverness		Sustainable Design	
Nairn		Business and Industrial Land	
Tornagrain		Accessibility and Transport	
Smaller Settlements in A96		Agricultural Land	
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	
Affordable Housing		Minerals	
Planning for an Ageing Population		Open Space and Physical Activity	
Gypsies/Travellers		Access to the Outdoors	
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:

Comments concern MIR does not take account of important issues of climate change and peak oil.
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Action Sheet Completed by:	GW
Date:	8/12/09

Woodside
Balblair
Dingwall
IV7 8LP

H.C. PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT SERVICE		
28 OCT 2009		
PASS TO	INITIALS	DATE
TS		
FILE REF:		

Director of Planning and Development
The Highland Council
Freepost SCO5568
Inverness
IV35BR

Date: 22nd October 2009

Dear Sir,

Subject: Highland Wide Local Development Plan – Main Issues Report

I am writing to express my strong concern that the Issues Report fails to take serious account of some of the most pressingly important issues of our day, namely climate change and peak oil.

The issue of climate change demands that we dramatically reduce our emissions of CO₂ and other greenhouse gases immediately and indeed that it might already be too late to avert catastrophic climate change. Given that there is no adequate plan to generate anything like sufficient CO₂ free energy in order to continue business as usual – it rather suggests that we should not plan for business as usual. Instead we should be dramatically scaling back on developments that do not help us to reduce energy requirements.

Regarding peak oil, most experts now expect that peak oil will occur sometime between now and about 2030. What is inevitable is that oil prices will rise dramatically over the period of the plan (indeed they are already rising as we start to come out of recession and have reached \$80 per barrel this week). As demand exceeds supply there will be price rises and shortages. Given that our whole way of life and our economy is dependent on cheap energy, this will lead to severe stresses. Scotland will not be immune. Again, this suggests that future development must result in a way of life that is less dependent on cheap energy and more resilient to future energy shocks.

The word 'sustainable' is used frequently throughout the issues report – sustainable communities, sustainable economy, sustainable design and sustainable development and some specific policies in the plan, for example, increasing support for cycling, are helpful. However, there is absolutely nothing sustainable about the underlying tenets of the plan, namely economic growth and population expansion. I cannot begin to imagine how it can possibly be helpful to encourage more growth of our oil hungry economy. The fall, when it comes, will only come harder. Nor can I understand why we should burden our area with more and more people when we will struggle to provide the energy and food for the people we already have once peak oil kicks in.

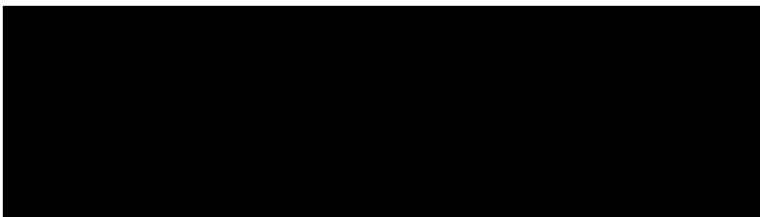
Instead we should be looking for economic 'transformation' that will enable us to constantly reduce our energy requirements and re-localise our economy. We should also be planning a gradual reduction in population to a level that the carbon free economy can sustain.

In practice this suggests the following types of actions:

- A focus on dramatically improving the existing housing stock to the highest energy standards
- Removal of the most energy inefficient buildings and replacement with buildings of the highest energy standards
- A step change in the quality of the public transport system and cycling facilities
- Encouragement for communities and individuals to produce and market food locally, both in the towns and in rural areas
- Encouragement for communities and individuals to provide a range of locally derived goods and services that currently come from across the globe
- Work to assist all communities, including the city, towns and more remote communities, to become more self reliant in a wide range of service areas
- Support for generation of renewable energy

In summary, to my mind the Issues Report represents 'business as usual' and 'old thinking' which is completely inadequate to address the environmental and resource issues we now face. Given the high likelihood that impacts arising from these issues will occur in the next few years, I would suggest that Highland Council have a duty to address them fully.

Yours sincerely

A large black rectangular redaction box covering the signature area.

Penny Edwards