

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

Reference Number:	<b>HWLDP-MIR-172</b>
Organisation/Individual:	Mrs Annie Stewart

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

**Key:**

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

<p>Response required regarding several questions raised:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-Vision</li> <li>-Sustainable Highland Communities</li> <li>-Inverness and A96 Corridor</li> <li>-Nairn</li> <li>-Tornagrain</li> <li>-Affordable Housing</li> </ul>
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Action Sheet Completed by:	GW
Date:	09/12/09

**Dawn Sutherland**

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**From:** Malcolm MacLeod - Planning  
**Sent:** 03 November 2009 14:17  
**To:** Dawn Sutherland; Alice Brown - Planning  
**Subject:** FW: Highland wide Local Development Plan consultation



Highland Wide  
Development Plan... PI log and acknowledge

Malcolm

Malcolm Macleod  
Development Plans Manager  
The Highland Council  
Planning & Development Service  
Glenurquhart Road  
Inverness  
IV3 5NX



Keep up to date with the work on the Highland wide Local Development Plan by visiting our blog at [www.hwldp.blogspot.com](http://www.hwldp.blogspot.com)

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

**From:** Annie Stewart [mailto: [REDACTED]]  
**Sent:** 03 November 2009 14:13  
**To:** Malcolm MacLeod - Planning  
**Subject:** Fwd: Highland wide Local Development Plan consultation

----- Original message -----

**From:** "Annie Stewart" < [REDACTED] >  
**To:** [REDACTED]  
**Cc:** [REDACTED]  
**Date:** Mon, 02 Nov 2009 19:36:53 +0100  
**Subject:** Highland wide Local Development Plan consultation

Dear Devplans team,

I am writing to comment on the Highland wide Local Development Plan Main Issues Report as invited in the consultation process which has a deadline of 9 November.

I attach my comments in a "Word" document of 11 pages below. These comments have been informed through reading the Report and attending various meetings held in Nairn with Malcolm Mcleod and others in the team. I have followed the contents of the Report and answered each of the questions. However I have concentrated my comments on Inverness, The A96 Corridor and Nairn.

I would appreciate an acknowledgement of receipt of this message with my comments.

I would also be interested to know what process you have put in place to deal with all the comments you may receive from other Nairn residents and those issues raised at the meetings. Does this process include the participation of our four elected local councillors? I have separately

sent them a copy of my comments.

I hope the outcome of this consultation will be a new local Plan for Nairn which reflects the views of the residents on Nairn's future role in the Highlands and will set out development planning over the next 20 years to enhance the town of Nairn as a place to live and work in and as a tourist destination.

I would like to express my thanks to Malcolm for the time he has taken in the consultation with Nairn residents.

Yours sincerely  
Mrs Annie Stewart  
33 Albert Street  
Nairn  
IV12 4HF

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Mrs A Stewart  
33 Albert Street  
Nairn  
IV12 4HF

### Highland wide Local Development Plan Aug 2009

As a resident of Nairn I would like to make the following comments on the Highland wide Local Development Plan as part of the consultation process:

#### **1. Purpose of the Main Issues Report:**

The map of the future Area Local Development Plans shows a new Inner Moray Firth and West Highland area. Obviously the thrust of the Highland wide Local Development Plan (HwLDP) should focus on the three areas of the Highlands.

**However, for many communities in the new West Highland and Inner Moray Firth areas any future development must also look to compliment and link into what is happening to the south and east of these areas, especially in terms of transport links and enhancement of services for tourists.**

#### **2. National Planning Framework 2 for Scotland and the Highlands:**

**While taking account of the National Planning Framework 2 is clearly essential to ensure a consistent and cohesive approach to planning across Scotland, the Highland Plan should seek to reflect the right scale and appropriate type of development that will bring the most benefit to its region. This may involve limiting some aspects of the Framework and looking to include alternative ideas which will still meet national objectives.**

#### **3. The Vision for the Highlands:**

The Corporate Plan states that the Highlands will be "one of Europe's leading regions". **What exactly is the vision? What will the Highlands offer in terms of economic activity? Will it develop industry, commerce, agriculture, tourism or environmental sustainability to make it such an important region? Will it be a leader in a quality area to live and work, (eco) tourism, renewable energy, food production, technology, light industry.....? A clear vision of what the Highlands should be needs to be defined at the outset to inform the plan and determine each local plan. I would like to see the Highlands take a lead in sustainable living. This plan offers the opportunity to manage growth and population increases in a way that that can make the whole of the Highlands more sustainable.**

The plan also seems to be based on the highest possible level of increase in population. **There has been a big change since this was first drafted. In the current climate surely this is unrealistic. The statistical figures do not add up. Has anyone asked if such an increase is either desirable or appropriate for the Highlands? The infrastructure to support such an increase is too expensive. The plan can have options in place if there really is such a population boom, but the thrust of the plan should focus on a more realistic and achievable level of development with appropriate options for this.**

#### **Sustainable Highland Communities:**

**Will the Highlands really have such an increased population? What research**

has been done to suggest this? If, so, what sort of increase, in what age group, what social mix & to what effect?

Or does the area need to manage its population more effectively, e.g. by providing the sustainable infrastructure to consolidate current development and encourage more inward economic investment; by de-centralising its population and encouraging the young working age group to stay in the areas they grow up in by providing a more sustainable lifestyle in the more remote areas; or by enabling its ageing population to have an enhanced quality of life?

Catering for the ageing population is indeed a major priority but perhaps this is more critical in some areas of the Highlands than others

#### **Safeguarding our Environment:**

The proposed plan seems to be weighted heavily towards providing more housing at the expense of the other critical features of a sustainable lifestyle.

There is a need to balance the continued development of housing with the ability to deliver the proper infrastructure to support it. There is already a lack of adequate infrastructure & services in many areas of the Highlands. Getting the infrastructure in place is essential. The plan must ensure that this catch up can follow.

A balance must also be struck between continued development in any form and the conservation of the natural environment. There are many areas of special interest/unique environments which are being threatened. These are an essential part of what makes the Highlands attractive, both as a place to live and work, and as a tourist destination.

There is also prime agriculture land, e.g. along the Moray Firth, which is likely to become increasingly important for food production as the population grows and the demand to provide more locally grown food increases.

#### **Where should growth go and how can we deliver it:**

The plan seems to envisage an over-concentration of population and development in and around Inverness rather than exploring ways to decentralise and diversify activity. It is very important to identify and retain the different roles the different areas of the Highlands currently play and provide development to sustain these. Future development in each area should compliment this role. It is also important to ensure the existing local communities are happy with the evolving roles that are envisaged. Local communities must be properly engaged in the consultations for this plan.

#### **Inverness and the A96 corridor:**

The plan seems to seek to implement the A96 Corridor Framework which may have been relevant in 2007 when we were still in an economic boom. However, times have changed. There is an implication that Inverness and the A96 Corridor should have the same type and volume of development.

This threatens to create one huge area of the Highlands serving Inverness with too large and concentrated a population to effectively sustain. Surely there are other areas in the Highlands that could encourage & sustain some of the burden of population growth and would benefit from this? What is this increased population going to do in Inverness and the Corridor? Has sufficient research been done as to the age group and social mix of this increased population?

Instead of a blanket type of development, urban sprawl, for the whole of

the Corridor there should be an enhancement of the separate identities of each community along the Corridor to service the whole area.

Inverness should be developed to enhance its urban facilities and offer the appropriate density of housing, quality retail, culture and tourist services and sufficient commercial and economic opportunities to sustain its population and offer employment for those living along the Corridor.

The other communities along the Corridor should compliment development in Inverness in their separate and unique ways. They can offer the population of Inverness and the Corridor, and visitors, a variety of services such food production, outdoor leisure facilities and tourist attractions but they must also have their own opportunities for economic growth.

There may be scope for some of the Corridor to be developed for biomass or waste renewable energy but these must be sensitively and appropriately sited.

The development described is almost exclusively housing. This on its own does not grow the economy.

Inverness is an important tourism hub for the Highlands. The A96 Corridor also provides important tourist attractions. No mention is made of enhancing the services and access for this important contribution to the local economy. Inverness and the Corridor need to remain attractive areas for tourists.

The plans for the regeneration of large areas of Inverness will involve pulling down existing housing. Where are those currently living in these areas going to be relocated to? Any relocation should be accommodated in Inverness, not along the Corridor.

#### Inverness:

Again enabling some improvements to the infrastructure to catch up with recent housing development is essential before more housing is built.

There is little detail of proposed housing development in Inverness. What are future housing plans for the city? Brownfield sites should be a priority before too many new areas are designated.

There is also little detail of the overall vision of Inverness. I would see it as a mini Edinburgh. An attractive area capital offering: an appropriate level of dense mixed housing; a regenerated city centre with quality retail outlets, cultural centres and leisure opportunities which maximise the assets of the river, the canal and the harbour; excellent transport links to facilitate the tourist trade and encourage inward economic investment not only to the city but also to the rest of the Highlands; enhanced education facilities to serve the Highlands and an improved infrastructure to make it a sustainable city to live in and visit.

*Q1: I agree with some elements of the preferred option. A properly prepared masterplan for Inverness of consolidation, regeneration and enhancement should be the priority for the city. However, I do not think a proper vision for Inverness as a capital of the Highlands and a hub for the region has been thought through. There should be less emphasis on simply providing a huge quantity of housing and more emphasis on a holistic approach to the future role of Inverness to make it a sustainable and profitable Highland capital.*

#### The A96 Corridor:

Is the A96 Corridor being seen simply as an extension of Inverness which

will stop at Auldearn? This is not desirable. Places along the Corridor, like Nairn and Cawdor, need to be treated as separate communities with a separate but complimentary identity and role from that of Inverness. While any plan to develop the Corridor should look to develop this relationship, the communities along the Corridor may need to play a different role by offering more in the way of enhanced leisure facilities, land for increased food production or more housing and facilities for the older age groups.

The Moray Firth does not stop at Auldearn. The plan must also look further east and provide a link into plans, especially for road and rail, for the rest of Moray and further east to Aberdeen.

While the identification of the land to the east of Inverness for further housing, industrial and commercial development is obviously the easy option and, therefore, the most attractive to developers it may not be the most desirable? By going for this easy option the plan threatens an area important for agricultural production and attractive to tourism. Once lost this cannot be regained.

Improvements to the infrastructure between Inverness and Nairn are key to any further development in the area. That improvement must include consideration of infrastructure links onwards to the east and Aberdeen. The road network is not the only key. A train stop at the airport is essential and should have been thought of at the outset. Enhanced rail links to the south and east are equally important. Will the plans include more green transport such as electric buses and other delivery vehicles. Could the Highlands and Inverness in particular show a lead in greener public transport?

Dualling the A96 and a bypass for Nairn are needed now. Any further housing development in the area would add even more strain to the existing traffic problems and this must be addressed.

*Q.2: I do not agree with the preferred options as already indicated. I do not think the A96 Corridor Framework should form the basis of the plan. Is the proposed large scale development in this area realistic and is it the best option both for Inverness and for the communities along the Corridor? Do the communities such as Nairn and Cawdor really need it, or is this dense housing development really to service Inverness? Can the area support such a level of development before more improvements to the infrastructure are in place?*

*I am in favour of widening the search for long term expansion sites to the rest of the Inner Moray area. This may take longer. It may be a more expensive option and involve more challenging projects. However, it may also be the more sensible option in the long term and could provide benefits to the communities in those areas that might otherwise be overlooked. It would also help to spread the load of future development and avoid over concentration in one area.*

#### **Developer contribution in the A96 Corridor:**

Including schools and other facilities in any future developments is a given. Most local schools in the area have already reached their capacity. An increase in population must go hand in hand with sufficient schooling, medical care, services, employment and green spaces. Transport links should also be included in this.

*Q 3: I agree with preferred option provided that it is an enforceable requirement on developers to put the necessary infrastructure in place. Opportunities for private funding can also be explored.*

### East Inverness:

The map shows an alarming area of high and medium density housing. Is this based on realistic figures showing a definite need?

Getting the necessary infrastructure in place for the Beechwood campus is vital

Providing commercial and economic opportunities is as important as more housing.

This area adjoins Culloden which plays two roles: it services Inverness and it is a very important tourist destination. It must remain an attractive area for tourists and more could be done to enhance the tourist experience in this area.

*Q 4: I agree with elements of the preferred option. The Beechwood campus could bring great benefit to Inverness. However, future housing development should reflect realistic figures showing the need. The appropriate infrastructure must go hand in hand with this. Transport links will be key. The area immediately adjacent to Culloden could focus more on development to enhance the tourist trade, e.g. retail and hotel opportunities.*

### Nairn:

Nairn is indeed a distinctive and historical town with an important role as a tourist destination and a cultural centre surrounded by productive farmland. The importance of these aspects, especially tourism, has not been mentioned.

What planned expansion for Nairn should there be that serves to enhance its existing character? What is the vision for Nairn's future? A thriving town with a balanced population? An important tourist destination? A cultural centre? An area of food production? My vision would be a mix of some or all of the above? Will this proposed development grow Nairn in a way that its residents want? Further research and consultation is needed into exactly what role Nairn should play in the Highlands and what kind of expansion is appropriate.

Rather the proposed plans imply that because it has plenty of flat farmland around it Nairn should be intensely developed, e.g. as proposed at Sandown, and become simply an area of urban sprawl, a satellite of Inverness providing housing and services for those working in and around the city. I have seen no recent research to suggest that the population of Nairn is actually going to grow so much. Obviously if it is surrounded by new housing developments people from further afield may be attracted to move there. As I have mentioned above this is an easy option to take but it is not a vision I or many residents of Nairn share. There is a need for new housing but on a much more limited scale.

Land to the west and south may be equally/more suitable sites for development. The proposed Delnies development seems to compliment Nairn's character and offers a very attractive part of a vision for Nairn's future. The consultation on the proposed development to the south looks to help regenerate the town centre and offer the right density of housing. However this development is impossible without new road links to the south of the town. All the identified areas may be suitable sites for some less dense development to be included in the plan once the vision for Nairn has been properly addressed and provided Nairn can keep attractive east and west gateways with its vistas across the Moray Firth.

I understand that recent demographic surveys have shown that Nairn has a larger than average ageing population. Many in the older age groups are still active and may still want some kind of employment. The plan needs to address

this. One possibility would be to earmark Nairn as one area in the Highlands to enhance housing and services for the older age groups – including a retirement village in one of the housing developments, improving access to and from the town centre and other essential services, retaining and enhancing services for the elderly? This could reduce some of the load on Inverness instead of forcing Nairn residents to use services in Inverness.

The same survey shows a lower than average younger population of working age. Some of the planned development must provide housing and economic opportunities in the town to attract and retain a younger working age group to ensure a more balanced population in the future.

Improvements are needed now to the infrastructure of Nairn: a bypass, better waste treatment, new schools. The bypass is essential whatever development is planned. "Some years away" is not good enough for the plan.

Equally important for any future development is the regeneration and refurbishment of the town centre and its historical buildings. The local population need improved local services and Nairn needs an attractive town centre for visitors.

Another key part of the plan should be to enhance services and access for tourism and conserve the natural environment in and around the town: the green spaces in the centre, the wetlands, the woodlands, and the visual and physical access to the coast, the Links and the riverside. This benefits both the tourism industry and the local community.

Nairn should not lose huge tracts of its surrounding farmland. This should not be threatened by new development.

Nairn also looks south and east and any future transport development in Nairn should improve links to these other areas and compliment plans for e.g. Grantown, Aviemore, Forres, Elgin and Aberdeen

*Q 5: Neither option is preferred. Nairn should be developed in a way that retains its existing unique character but still offers benefit to the Highlands' economy. A more limited but balanced plan of development for Nairn is preferred that may include sites at Delnies and to the south but does not threaten the farmland and natural environment surrounding the town. This should provide some new housing, bring much needed economic growth to Nairn, regenerate the town centre and enhance the retail and leisure facilities and tourist opportunities.*

*A Nairn bypass with a fixed route and timescale for completion should be part of the plan, as should the regeneration of the town centre and other improvements to the town's infrastructure.*

#### **Tornagrain:**

*Q 6: I do not agree with the preferred option. Creating another town between Inverness and Nairn makes no sense at all. What unique character would it have? How would it provide economic growth for the local area? How would it compliment Inverness and Nairn other than solving a housing problem for Inverness? Expansion should be made in Inverness and other areas where there are already existing communities.*

*There are plans to extend the business park around the airport, which are sensible. This can offer housing and tourist facilities such as a good hotel as well as commercial activity. There is no sensible reason to have a whole new town.*

**Smaller Settlements in the A96 Corridor:**

*Q 7: I agree with the preferred option. This is a more sensible option to Tornagrain. Cawdor and the other settlements are existing communities. Ways to maintain their different characters but expand and develop them appropriately should be identified.*

**Caithness and Sutherland:**

*Q 8: Again reference to "allow development of housing opportunities ..... in surrounding rural areas" without any details of what purpose this housing will serve. There may be a need but there may also be a need for other types of development. There may also be as much need to improve the infrastructure of the area.*

**Easter Ross and Nigg:**

*Q 9: I agree with the preferred option.*

**Development of Local Centres:**

The first sentence of this is key to the overall HwLDP. The Highlands must decentralise and diversify. Developing the smaller towns mentioned is critical for the sustainable growth of the whole area.

*Q 10: I agree with the preferred option. The criteria for having good quality and accessible services which has been identified should equally be applied to Inverness and the A96 Corridor. For most tourists Inverness is their first stop in the Highlands.*

**Wider Countryside and Fragile areas:**

*Q 11: I agree with the most of the preferred option. Important areas must be protected, not just from housing and services development but also from other kinds of development such as wind farms. Are these really proving so economically efficient that large swathes of fragile areas like Dava Moor are to be blighted by them. A consistent but not blanket approach is desirable. The unique quality of the different areas must be recognised and may have to be treated differently. The biodiversity of these areas should be taken into account. Any development in fragile areas must be justified not just in terms of providing housing. It should offer sustainability both for the local community and for the environment.*

**Policy options for the Highland Wide Local Development Plan:**

See above for previous comments on the predictions and provisions for such a huge increase in population and the vision that this will and should be concentrated in one main area of the Highlands. I do seriously question the projection of the highest migration scenario.

The Plan should look to take a more pro-active approach to manage its existing and projected population in a way that benefits the whole of the Highlands. This should both maintain the more populated areas as attractive places to live, work and visit and develop the more isolated and rural areas in a sustainable way.

It should be far more proactive by looking at ways to encourage population growth and greater economic activity in Caithness, Sutherland and Lochaber, while seeking to limit growth in Inverness, Nairn, Badenoch and Strathspey to a sustainable level which will retain the quality of life these places currently offer.

The proposed plan seeks to grow the population in this one area by providing the necessary housing and services at the risk of further de-populating other areas.

Has sufficient research been done on ways of reusing and redeveloping existing buildings in urban areas to provide more housing and opportunities for using brownfield sites more effectively, perhaps to combine more housing and retail/commercial activity?

If a barrier to housing development areas outwith Inverness and the A96 Corridor is the lack of infrastructure then the plan should look to find ways of enabling the provision of an adequate infrastructure to make such development possible. This again smacks of identifying Inverness and the A96 Corridor as the cheap and easy development option, not the most sensible sustainable option for the long term benefit of the Highlands as a whole.

*Q12: I do not agree with the preferred option for the reasons outlined above. I prefer the stated alternative. I think the population growth will be lower. I would like the option to go further and adopt a positive approach to growing the population of the more rural and less densely populated areas of the Highlands and ensuring a more limited but sustainable growth in the main urban areas.*

#### Housing in the Countryside:

I think there are an increasing number of families who wish to live in the countryside but need access to services. Providing housing, services and the infrastructure to enable this will cost more than simply expanding existing urban areas. This should not be a reason to exclude planning for such development.

*Q13: In general I agree with the preferred option. It is a fine balance that has to be struck between encouraging both population and economic growth in the countryside while protecting important farmland and limiting the impact on the landscape.*

#### Affordable Housing:

Why does there need to be “a consistent approach to this throughout the Highland.”? Different areas may have different mixes of population and different needs. Plans for housing should reflect this. Build affordable housing in areas that need it. Plan other types of housing and development in other areas that do not need it.

*Q14. I do not agree with the preferred solution. However, I do think the plan should consider innovative methods of delivery of affordable housing. Can more affordable housing be created by reusing and redeveloping existing housing rather than more new builds. The plan should offer adequate affordable housing in the areas of greatest need. I would also like to see the plan indicate the quality and design of new housing. All new builds should be greener and more sustainable. There should be guidelines on, e.g. insulation standards.*

#### Planning for an Ageing population:

The ageing population in the Highlands is a crucial issue. The plan should enable employment opportunities for this ageing population as well as suitable housing and other services. This age group can contribute to the future economy of the region. Many of these older people are still active and seek both economic and leisure opportunities.

I wholeheartedly endorse the policy that older people should be helped to live in their own homes for as long as possible.

Unfortunately many old people do eventually need more care. Various solutions to this should be considered. Retirement villages, specialist accommodation, care homes, more mixed housing.

There is also a vital need to plan to retain and enhance existing services for the elderly in their local areas such as respite and day care.

*Q15: I agree in general with the preferred option. Provision of housing for the elderly is just as important as affordable housing. Again housing for the elderly should be targeted in those areas of current and projected need, but could also be planned in areas that can offer attractions to that age group.*

**Gypsies/Travellers:** No comments

*Q16: I agree with the preferred option*

**Retailing:**

Supporting the role of town centres is essential, as is growing local retail facilities. Reducing the carbon footprint of local communities can only be achieved by this approach.

*Q17: I agree with the preferred option.*

**Developer Contributions:**

Developers contributing to a shared pot in rural areas is an excellent idea.

*Q18: I agree with the preferred option*

**Safeguarding Our Environment:**

**Natural, Built and Cultural Heritage**

The natural, built and cultural heritage is what defines the Highlands. It must not be lost.

*Q19: I agree with the preferred option. There must be a holistic approach to land use.*

**Previously Used Land:**

*Q20: I agree with the preferred option. This should form a key part to the plan for development in rural areas and be part of plans in more urban areas. It offers a relatively cheap and easy option to using farmland and green spaces for future housing development.*

**Wild Land:**

*Q21: I agree with the preferred option. This land can offer economic benefit both in terms of tourism and reducing our carbon footprint.*

**Water Environment:**

*Q22: I agree with the preferred option. The quality of Highland water must be protected*

**Sustainable Development and Climate Change:**

Why the need for so many wind farms. They are not an economically efficient form of renewable energy. They are attractive to build in the short term because of current subsidies and incentives. Once these are taken away, and they will be, they are not as viable. I would like to see a very limited expansion of wind farms and the area for significant protection greatly extended. I worry that

farms like the one planned on Dava Moor will despoil forever an area of natural heritage and the disturbance to the peat in the building of it will threaten the biodiversity of the area and could release more carbon than will be saved by the farm. Smaller scale and more localised alternatives should be fully researched and explored. Marine energy may offer potential but it must also be proved to be an efficient and effective long term source. In identifying areas for such development the plan must consider the impact on the natural environment and tourism.

Only passing reference is made to future hydro electric power development or other alternatives such as biomass and energy from waste. Surely these sources offer as much potential, are more effective and efficient and cause far less impact on the landscape. They also offer benefit to the local communities. The development of hydro power can also create areas offering leisure and retail opportunities.

*Q23: I disagree with the preferred option. I would like to see a more limited growth in wind farms and as much priority put on identifying areas for hydro power, biomass and energy from waste. Any development of marine energy must not threaten the marine ecology which is so important to the Highland economy.*

#### Flooding:

*Q24: I agree with the preferred option. Climate change trends in the last few years indicate that flooding may become more of a problem.*

#### Waste Management:

Although the actual sites are not specified in writing the map of future waste development seems to show two plants for an in Vessel Composter and Energy from Waste in Nairn. The scale and siting of these would be critical to maintaining Nairn's attractive character.

*Q25: I agree with the preferred option. I support plans to deal with waste and would like to see a real increase in using waste to provide energy provided the chosen sites are appropriately identified.*

#### Air Quality:

*Q26: I agree with the preferred option. Air quality should be valued and could offer potential for increased tourism opportunities for those interested in astronomy and the sky at night. If space trips go ahead from Lossiemouth there could be spin-off economic opportunities linked to this for the Inner Moray area.*

#### Sustainable design:

*Q27: I agree with the preferred option. All new builds should have a low carbon footprint, be more energy efficient and offer better insulation. The emphasis must be on sustainable development.*

#### A Competitive, Sustainable & Adaptable Highland Economy:

##### Business and Industrial Land:

*Q28: I agree with the preferred option. This is as important as providing housing. The economy of the Highlands must grow to support an increased population. I agree that tourism will remain a vital element in this.*

**Accessibility and transport:**

The plan should reflect national policy. The proposed dualling of the A9 and A96 and improvements to other routes are essential for future economic growth and to sustain more rural and isolated communities. The Nairn by-pass must be included in the plan.

New developments should contribute to these improvements

In Inverness and along the A96 Corridor there must be potential for greener public transport. It is relatively flat and compact with a good network of roads.

Improvements to local rail links could have a big impact on reducing the use of cars.

Future sites for housing must not continue to add pressure on transport needs without systems in place for the appropriate provision of infrastructure to follow.

*Q29: I broadly agree with the option but would like to see it go further in the provision of better and greener public transport.*

**Crofting and Agriculture:**

*Q29: I prefer the stated alternative. I think the plan should not only retain existing farm and croft land and protect additional agricultural land. It should also identify new areas for food production. The Highlands could become a leading food producing area in Europe.*

*Q30: I prefer the stated alternative. It may be necessary to build in some flexibility to look at development on a case by case basis to avoid land standing empty and unproductive for long periods.*

*Q31: I agree with the preferred option.*

*Q32: I agree with the preferred option provided there is ample opportunity for and weight given to local consultation.*

*Q33: I agree with the preferred option*

**Coastal Development:**

*Q34: I agree with the preferred option*

**Forestry and Woodland:**

*Q35: I agree with the preferred option*

**Minerals:**

*Q36: I agree with the preferred option*

**A Healthier Highlands:**

*Q37: I agree with preferred option*

**Access to the Outdoors:**

*Q38: I agree with the preferred option but would amend the wording to make it a requirement for developers to take account of access issues*

