

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

Reference Number:	<b>HWLDP-MIR-236</b>
Organisation/Individual:	Ardross Community Council (John Edmonson)

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

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

<p>Infrastructure must come first in A96 corridor          Smaller flexible projects should be looked at for Nigg          Ardross should be defined as a preserved area          More realistic if lower growth scenario looked at          Affordable housing should be provided in perpetuity for rent          Risk that local features are not given enough protection under Natural Heritage approach          Council should support micro renewables          More consistent waste policy          Business can only grow with improved infrastructure          Tight control on crofting is needed          Should be more emphasis on protection of agricultural land          Need to protect services in local communities</p>
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Action Sheet Completed by:	SH
Date:	10/12/09

**Dawn Sutherland**

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**From:** Secretary Ardross Community Council |  
**Sent:** 09 November 2009 13:24  
**To:** devplans  
**Subject:** Highland Wide Local Development Plan Main Issues Report



HWLDP  
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(697 KB)



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Dear Sirs

Please find attached the Community Council's response to the above.

There are two attachments.

Please acknowledge receipt.

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<http://www.netintelligence.com/email>

# Ardross Community Council

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

8<sup>th</sup> November 2009

Dear Sirs,

## **Your Ref: Highland wide Local Development Plan Main Issues Report**

Please find the response of the Community Council below, it is possible that some community councillors responded as individuals. Please could you acknowledge receipt of this response.

### *Question 1:*

We agree with the Preferred Option (PO), and not the alternative. There is no question transport links are a big priority especially over water (canals and Firth). In general we would prefer that the brownfield and expansion sites were used. There was some feeling however that by concentrating on Inverness population would be driven from the rural areas to the towns. There is some concern also about the possible use of prime agricultural land. Concentrating on Inverness might not encourage diversity in the Highlands.

### *Question 2:*

The A96 corridor is our preferred option, but infrastructure (not necessarily transport) must come first. Provision of Park and Ride is important, this would not need road improvements.

We are not in favour of Preferred Alternative 2 and would oppose this. The road and more importantly bridge network is inadequate to follow this strategy. The area in Preferred Option 2 is further away from Inverness than the A96 corridor. The rail journey is disproportionately longer than the A96 route because of the Beauly Firth. This is an important consideration if any option is to be sustainable and help the carbon footprint of the Highlands. The demand for housing will start to heavily encroach in areas which do not have adequate service provision (water, sewage etc.) and are expensive for the Council to service. This is not sensible. Alness should not be earmarked as an area of major expansion.

### *Question 3:*

We agree with the PO, not the stated alternative. Please be aware as stated in our response in Q1 the importance of the prime agricultural land along the A96.

*Question 4:*

We agree with the principle of the PO, the word "commitments" however is meaningless. Definite plans and promises need to be given to the upgrading of the Inshes junction, Raigmore interchange and the Longman roundabout before a major development expansion takes place.

*Question 5:*

We agree with the PO. A by-pass is essential.

*Question 6:*

We do agree with PO, but as per responses to Q1 and Q3 road junction improvements in Inverness are very important, before this development takes place. The Highland Council (HC) need to recognise the importance of the prime agricultural land. The protection of historic settings such as Cawdor is important.

*Question 8:*

What improvements to road and transport (A9) are proposed to support this Action Plan.

*Question 9:*

We do not agree with the PO. The Community Council is extremely reluctant to support the Action Plan regarding Nigg. There has been a sorry history of large infrastructure projects in this area, coming and going with largely imported labour. Large monolithic projects, more suitable for the Central Belt are not the way forward for the Highlands, but smaller flexible approaches which are more sustainable. It certainly should not be used for the decommissioning of any sort of equipment because of the pollution risk. The HC should be extremely careful in promoting the area of Nigg for renewables: witness the Vesta workers on the Isle of Wight.

Improvements to all aspects of infrastructure are important if any further development were to take place. This should include a moratorium on the closing of rural schools.

*Question 10:*

Development needs to be flexible and not rely purely on tourism. Again all sorts of infrastructure improvements are required. Small local ventures should be encouraged, to prevent Inverness becoming the complete centre of gravity for the whole of the Highlands. Alness and Beaulieu should be added to the list.

*Question 11:*

This is a key area for our area. We agree with the PO, however it moves down to the detail. Our area is under severe housing pressure, it's character is fundamentally changing. We would want our area to be protected from over development. Almost our entire Community Council area should be defined as a Pressured Areas. We will be considering the maps very carefully when they are produced. One way of supporting development in fragile areas would be to look more closely at the community buy out model such as happened on Eigg.

*Question 12:*

We do not agree with the PO. We prefer the stated alternative. This is more realistic in the current economic climate and squeeze on the central Scottish economy from the lack of funds from Westminster. Migration from the rest of the EU will be less as the migrants home countries gain economically on the Scottish economy.

*Question 13:*

We would probably agree with the PO if it did not have the last bullet point. Namely "regeneration to be a key priority". This is interpreted at a local level as build anything anywhere as long as you are providing jobs in the construction. This is not sustainable.

The ad hoc nature of development in the Highlands is destroying its character, and a Housing in the Countryside Design Guide is well overdue. The fact is that poorly designed and sited houses are still being built and approved in the countryside by the HC and this should be stopped. (We have attached a recent example). The HC will ruin the Highlands unless it stops approving poor banal designs and seeks an improvement of the standard of housing in the countryside something it has singularly failed to do. Good design will mean less resistance to housing in the countryside. The use of brownfield, infill and settlement expansion is the way forward.

In many ways we would sympathise more with Alternative Option 1.

*Question 14:*

We agree with the PO. Particularly the reduction to 4 houses and increase of percentage. Affordable Housing should be provided for rent in perpetuity.

*Question 15:*

We agree with the PO. However thought should also be given to existing housing stock and units suitability for older people. All housing developments similar limits to Q14 should include provision for old people. Maybe rather than increasing percentage or reducing the number of houses as in Q14 a commitment should be given for the provision of housing for older people. It is important that the housing stock of any area has a wide profile of accommodation. Many elderly people have to leave our community because of the lack of suitable housing. They are not eligible for Affordable Housing. It is important to realise that pushing elderly people away from rural areas to the towns where services might be closer, but they will need them more as they become unhappy and depressed because they live in a strange environment and subsequently more dependant on HC services. This is more expensive in the long run. Provision of allotment space for any development should be considered. Home grown food has a smaller carbon footprint than imported food.

*Question 16:*

It might be appropriate to have a different approach in different areas, this would depend on the results of any consultation.

*Question 17:*

Broadly agree with PO. Provision of in town retail outlets must be maintained. The reliance on out of town retail schemes is not good either environmental or for the well-being of a town centre. Free parking should be encouraged in towns and villages to encourage visitors.

*Question 18:*

We agree with the PO. Especially the idea of a shared Pot. It is important that sports and leisure facilities are paid for by the developer to ensure a social cohesion to an area. There is a danger that such contributions are seen as a passport to inappropriate developments, that permissions are being bought.

*Question 19:*

We are concerned that not all areas in the Highlands have been surveyed and consequently important features do not show up on the records. This makes desktop exercises dangerous. The hierarchy is dangerous as it implies that areas of Local importance are less significant than National. But what if all areas of Local importance are lost, or the area is the only area of its type, should this be lost too? We need to address heritage interests outwith designated sites, the Preferred Option is definitely not the way to go.

*Question 20:*

We agree with the PO. Adhere to any findings

*Question 21:*

We agree with the PO. A sensitive approach is required. It is extremely important to preserve these wild lands. We are a community council with wild lands and have seen erosion of these over the years. The HC must be proactive in protecting this environment. The HC should recognise the importance of wild lands not far from the centres of population as a place where local residents and tourists can enjoy a sense of tranquility and wildness. These are particularly valuable as they are closest to people and there is less environmental impact in people travelling to these places. There is a concern that any decision on this matter as having no teeth as the HC has consistently ignored the importance of wild land in the face of development and the promise of jobs.

*Question 23:*

The Council should support micro-renewable including bio-mass. The production and transmission of massive renewable energy projects in the Highlands is becoming increasingly unsustainable. The transmission over large distances on overhead lines is very inefficient. The HC need to oppose any increased building of overhead power lines, they should be undergrounded. Whilst the pursuit of so called 'wet-renewables' is laudable, careful consideration should be given to how the electricity produced is transmitted the hundreds of miles to it's market. The use of overhead power lines is not supported by our community council. It is because of this push for renewables and it's associated infrastructure that many people in our community are cynical that the HC as in Q21 want to help preserve the wild lands of the Highlands.

We are also asking that Ardross is included in the area of Significant Protection because of the issue of cumulative impact of wind farms in line with PAN45, we would feel happier as a community if our area was included as an area of Significant Protection. There are three existing wind farm developments with one more to be built in 2010 in the Ardross area. There is a further 30 MW wind farm being planned and a 7.5MW Hydroelectric scheme being applied for by the end of November 2009.

*Question 24:*

We agree with the PO. However areas at risk are already identified, the problem is that they seem to be ignored or not dealt with appropriately at a local planning level. Many of the flooding problems are due to poor HC maintenance of ditches and culverts.

*Question 25:*

The HC waste policy is a shambles and quite often made up on the hoof. The number of waste streams collected by other Local Authorities that are currently not collected for recycling by the HC is long. Rather than burning or rotting waste, the HC should be making more efforts to collect a larger list of recyclates: cling-film, foil, envelopes, batteries, tetra-pak, food waste, other plastics etc. Incineration is not a good option it discourages the reduction of the waste stream the ultimate goal of

Zero-Waste (this is already happening in Shetland). The energy from waste proposals must have a market for the heat energy before the planning application is submitted. Many recent proposals have not been energy from waste plants, but incinerators. Anaerobic digesters should be seriously considered as they too produce energy. More can be done by the HC in reducing the waste stream to avoid landfill to Perth, but they have failed to take a lead in reducing waste (the affects this year are due to the recession) and reusing.

Many of the community are not convinced about the safety of incinerators in particular with reference to nano-particles. These are difficult to measure and therefore have not been legislated for, however the EU is pouring money into research and the HC must not embark on a policy of incineration in housing estates as suggested until this has been proved safe, this is the Precautionary Principle.

*Question 26:*

All very laudable, but not enough data is collected for air quality in the Highlands. Most data is done by extrapolation. This was found when researching for instance the Invergordon incinerator. Unless good widespread data is available then there is no datum for developers or planners alike. For instance dioxins are not measured in the Highlands at all.

*Question 27:*

Why is the HC still asking this question this should have been adopted years ago. Why has it not? It is crucial that the idea of sustainable design is incorporated. Local officers and committees seem to be reluctant to adopt these principles. The adoption of good design is critical to allowing development in the rural context and must be a priority.

*Question 28 A:*

The HC still seems to be focused on small business units and strategic sites, but the main employer is micro-businesses. These businesses can only be helped by better infrastructure: roads, transport and telephony, something which has not been discussed. Too often the encouragement of small businesses in rural areas is used as an excuse to build a dwelling which will never really be used as a business, but just as an opportunity to build a house.

*Question 28 B:*

In general we agree with the PO. Car parking at railway stations should be encouraged and better Park & Ride facilities should be provided. A firm upgrading of the road network is essential, the trouble spots are already well known. A crawler lane between the Tore roundabout and the Cromarty Bridge should be built. There are many accidents along this section.

The use of ferries along the west coast should be encouraged running north-south, especially those taking HGV traffic.

Better time-tabling particularly for trains at commuter times should be encouraged.

*Question 29:*

We agree with the PO. But this must be vigorously adhered to, sometimes development takes place for spurious reasons.

*Question 32:*

We would agree with the alternative, preserving the Hinterland is important, but of course community consultation is always important. Crofting Townships should really only be established on local need.

*Question 33:*

We have had experience here where the establishment of a woodland croft was approved, but it was neither a croft nor for the management of woodland in the end. Tight control is required.

*Question 34:*

We support the alternative, reason, to protect the visual environment etc.

*Question 36:*

Demand for such facilities is cyclical. Extreme care must be taken in considering large scale development with their long term consequences.

*Question 37:*

We agree with the PO. But it is vital to preserve the Hinterland. Liaise with schools to establish their demand for open space.

*Question 38:*

We agree with the PO. But this process should be publicised widely. There is a need to protect areas like Ardross from too much development to facilitate close by local access to the Outdoors and wildlands for large centres of population such as Alness. This relates back to Q11 and Q23.

We have few comments below which do not fall into the Questionnaire.

The UHI Millennium Institute is a good idea, but it will never be truly successful until there is campus where students live and study. Only then will it be the vehicle to attract educated people to study and remain in the Highlands.

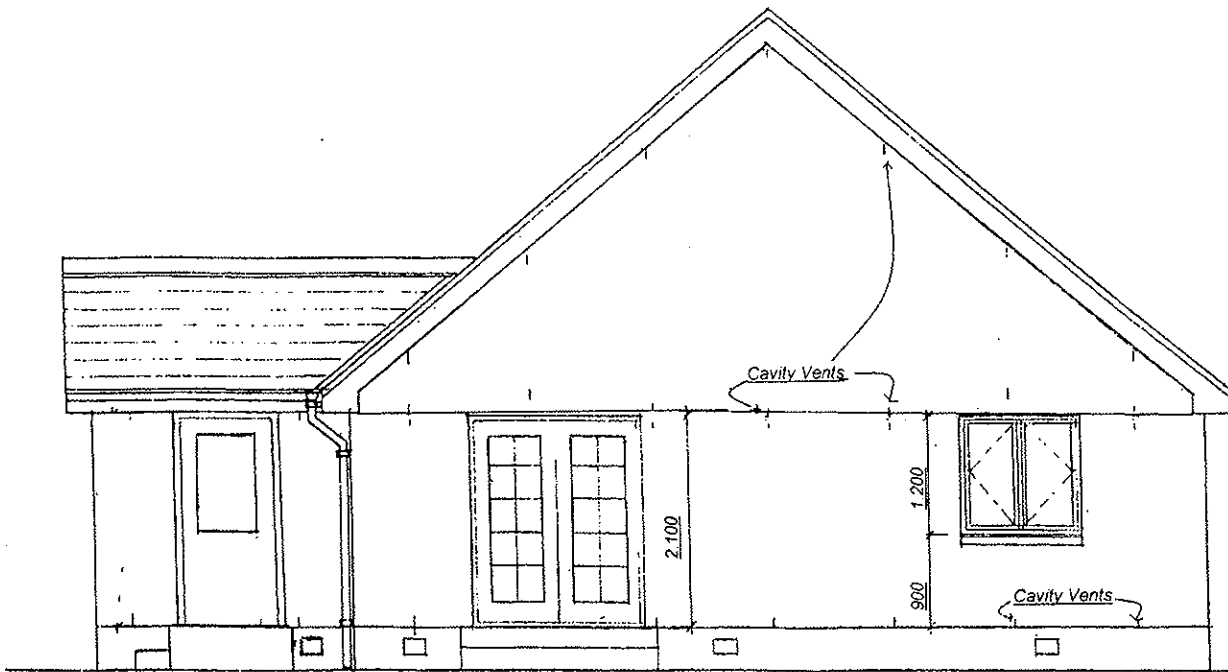
Too little emphasis has been placed on protecting prime agricultural land. There should be a shift of emphasis towards brownfield sites and use of urban sites. There is no mention of allotment provision for new housing, this should be a requirement when building new developments.

School closure can devastate a rural community. It is one of the services like roads and transport which is essential to a vibrant diverse community. It is a planning issue. The HC need to make sure that this document has a commitment to maintain vibrant communities by ensuring services are not eroded. It is not acceptable to plan for future housing whilst eroding the already existing communities because of cuts in services.

Yours Sincerely,

John Edmondson  
Secretary On behalf of Ardross Community Council

**Dalreoch, Strathrusdale, By Alness, Ross-shire  
IV17 0YQ**



South Elevation

THE  
PLAN 6 OF !!

Mr R MacKinnon, SUNDORNE  
Jamestown, Strathpeffer, IV14 9ER  
Mobile No. [REDACTED]  
Site = PLOT 2, Drivers Stance  
Ardross, Ainess  
Scale = 1:50  
SECTION DETAIL