

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

Reference Number:	HWLDP-MIR-48
Organisation/Individual:	Martin Sherring

Action:

Immediate Response Required	<input type="checkbox"/>
Meeting required with Respondent	<input type="checkbox"/>
Issue for Area Local Development Plan	<input type="checkbox"/>
Further Information Required	<input type="checkbox"/>
Other (Please Specify)	<input type="checkbox"/>

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

Disputes approach taken in vision for the Highlands p3-4 in that it doesn't anticipate the major impacts of peak oil and climate change.

Action Sheet Completed by:	GW
Date:	8/12/09

Dawn Sutherland

From: Martin Sherring [REDACTED]
Sent: 29 October 2009 21:45
To: devplans
Subject: HWLDP.doc

My reponse to the Main Issues report of the Highland Wide Local Development Plan is attached.

Regards.

Martin Sherring

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

Woodside
Balblair
Dingwall
IV7 3LP
29th October 2009

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

Dear Sir

I am writing in response to the Main Issues Report for the Highland Wide Local Development Plan. My comments are restricted to the "Vision for the Highlands" on pages 3 – 4. This is because I profoundly disagree with this section, and as this sets the scene for the whole document I find it hard to accept the premise for the more detailed proposals.

The Local Development Plans which will be informed by the Highland Wide Local Development Plan ("HWLDP") will set out a vision for the development of the Highlands for the next 10 to 20 years, i.e. taking us up to around 2030. Consequently, it needs to reflect the likely conditions in 2030 and beyond. There are two serious issues which are likely to have a major impact on our lives in that timescale, peak oil and climate change.

Peak oil

The UK Energy Research Council has recently published "Global Oil Depletion; An assessment of the evidence for a near-term peak in global oil production" (<http://www.ukerc.ac.uk/support/Global%20Oil%20Depletion>). The main conclusion of this report is that the peak of oil production is likely to arise between 2009 and 2031, i.e. at some time during the period affected by the HWLDP. The precise consequences of peak oil are difficult to predict, but clearly if demand continues to increase and production starts to fall, we will have to dramatically restrict our oil usage, and our lifestyles will need to change. We can either leave change until we reach peak oil, in which case it will be abrupt, involuntary and painful, or we can initiate change before peak oil, which gives some chance of a more measured and less painful transition.

Climate Change

The need to take rapid action to mitigate the impact of climate change is more widely recognised, and Scotland has adopted demanding targets in this respect. For instance, the Scottish Climate Change Delivery Plan (2009) anticipates that by 2030 electricity generation will be almost entirely de-carbonised, and both heat generation and transport largely de-carbonised. The action required to achieve these objectives will be far-reaching and expensive, even without the impact of peak oil.

Taking these two phenomena together, the cost of all forms of energy will increase dramatically, and consequently the economy of 2030 will need to change to reflect this.

However, the “Vision for the Highlands” set out on pages 4 and 5 of the HWLDP assumes that the economic position will be broadly similar to today’s. In particular:

- There are repeated references to “sustainable communities”, but no explanation of the ways in which they will be sustainable. For instance, if peak oil leads to shortages of food and oil, then any city is likely to be unsustainable, and sustainable communities will be those which are largely self-reliant.
- There is an explicit objective to facilitate an increase in the population of the Highlands. Increasing population will make the achievement of emissions targets more difficult, as will the continuing reduction in the average household size.
- The vision anticipates more people, more roads, more industry, an enhanced environment and reduced CO2 emissions, at a time when we will be moving out of an era defined by cheap energy. These aims are mutually inconsistent – for instance if we want more industry and reduced CO2 emissions, inevitably we will have a much higher density of wind turbines and consequently a degraded environment. Any vision needs to accept that we can’t have all of these, and prioritise.

In my view, increasing prosperity at the expense of the environment will lead to a worse quality of life, indeed increasing prosperity in a time of dramatic increases in energy prices will be impossible. Consequently I believe the vision should be based on a much reduced use of energy, and consequently reduced consumption, so that a high quality of life can be sustained with less income. This will mean that economic contraction can be accommodated without pain.

I accept that little work has been done to quantify the consequences of peak oil, but it seems self-evident that they will be far-reaching. In the light of the growing consensus that peak oil is imminent, I believe the Council has an obligation to consider and plan for the likely outcomes.

In conclusion, the Scottish Climate Change Delivery Plan specifies as one of 4 transformational changes required:

“A comprehensive approach to ensure that carbon (including the cost of carbon) is fully factored into strategic and local decisions about rural land use through: appropriate protection for Scotland’s carbon rich soils; minimising emissions from agricultural and other land use businesses; encouraging the sequestration of carbon, for example, through woodland planting; and the use of natural resources to generate renewable energy.”

I suggest that

- the HWLDP does not adopt this comprehensive approach;
- the HWLDP should also adopt a comprehensive approach to issues arising from peak oil

Yours sincerely,

Martin Sherring