

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

Reference Number:	HWLDP-MIR-290
Organisation/Individual:	Pete Campbell

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

Previously used Land	
Wild Land	
Water Environment	
Renewable Energy	x
Flooding	
Waste Management	
Air Quality	
Sustainable Design	
Business and Industrial Land	
Accessibility and Transport	
Agricultural Land	x
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:

Caithness and North Sutherland area should stretch to Bonar Bridge
 Smaller settlements must be considered as strategically important
 Housing available in the Countryside is vital
 Length of Sutherland should be designated as a key development location
 Payment to affordable housing more appropriate in rural areas
 Developer contributions should be in relation to impact
 Wild Land should not be protected at all costs
 Consider changing phrase "protection from windfarms"
 Should allow development of agricultural land where economic development can have a greater impact

Action Sheet Completed by:	SH
Date:	14/12/09

Dawn Sutherland

From: Simon Hindson on behalf of devplans
Sent: 25 November 2009 08:40
To: Dawn Sutherland
Subject: FW: Highland Local Plan

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

From: Pete Campbell [mailto:
Sent: 25 November 2009 04:39
To: Russell Smith
Cc: devplans; Robbie Rowantree - Member
Subject: Highland Local Plan

Russell

At last herewith some comments on the Plan. I apologise for taking so long to get on to this. It's always seemed to be a rather daunting prospect and one which could be put off till a later time. As it turns out, it's neither! My fault entirely.

Rather than commenting on all of their specific questions, (which I'm clearly not qualified to do) I'm only going to provide some comment on the ones I feel that I either have a personal view about or I can reply to on behalf of the Creich CC. I'll indicate in which capacity I'm commenting, on each.

Perhaps you might like to add some comments of your own in due course. I'll send you the hard copies of the Plan and the pro-forma questionnaire by post today.

Comments:

My comments are only on matters in which I have an interest or knowledge, personally or on behalf of Creich Community Council. I do not feel qualified to make comment on other matters:

P 23. On behalf of CCC. The Caithness & North Sutherland Regeneration Partnership was originally intended to stretch its influence as far down as East Sutherland (us in Bonar Bridge). It doesn't, and any discussion with them, via CASE/HIE etc is now Dounreay & Pentland Firth centric. This flies in the face of the dis-advantaged area that we occupy. Policy should include a wider area. It is quite misleading to suggest that Bonar Bridge and environs (CCC area) is not an economically fragile area. It is an area teetering on the edge of economic disaster, it has been for many years and there are few signs of that situation changing.

P 28. On behalf of CCC. The Plan, necessarily, is more interested in development around the larger population of Inverness and the Caithness towns, than smaller towns. Dornoch, Bonar Bridge and Lairg should not be omitted from lists of smaller strategically important towns.

Likewise, these smaller towns must be included in plans for housing and business development (P29)

P 30. Personal view. Housing in the countryside is a vital ingredient of the overall housing problem. In these days of restricted economic viability of small scale agriculture, including crofting, it is important that occupiers are permitted every planning advantage possible to allow small scale development of surplus land. Whilst this may not contribute much to agricultural productivity, it does allow one off small scale land sales for rural housing and, where coupled to small areas of land being sold with housing development, it may attract lifestyle occupiers who would, in all likelihood, make positive contribution to rural communities. It is essential to provide this capability in order to keep new occupiers and families coming into the rural communities.

P 31. On behalf of CCC. Dornoch is shown on this map in the wrong place - apology should be made to Dornoch residents. Whatever anyone may say, Bonar Bridge and its immediate locality (the area of the Creich CC) is economically fragile. It doesn't matter that the definition of this as interpreted or laid down by others such as HIE may indicate otherwise, they are wrong. The area shown as an employment deficit area in Caithness should also be applied to Bonar Bridge etc and the Kyle of Sutherland should be designated as a key development location. To ignore this would be entirely contrary to the needs of the area.

P 35. Personal view. Again, housing in the countryside is a vital ingredient of keeping the rural economy alive and policy should accommodate room for housing growth as well as the re-building/modernising of existing sites. This should apply to both low cost as well as premium housing.

P 37. Personal view. Do not artificially restrict building in the countryside. This becomes subjective and prescriptive and will restrict economic growth.

P 38. Personal view. The requirement for developers to provide affordable housing in the countryside does not always fit with the development and allowance should be made for the payment of commuted sums towards localised low cost housing. Whilst this is usually the case, it should be more clearly defined with known values within known localities so that communities know exactly what their planning gain might be when considering applications. It would also remove a lengthy negotiation barrier with developers - (personal experience).

P 43. On behalf of CCC. Developer contributions to local communities should also be defined in relation to their impact. In particular this should be applied to renewable energy projects such as windfarms and local hydro plants - perhaps even off-shore installations as well. It is well recognised that these can be highly profitable installations, largely due to ROC payments (eventually paid for by the consumer), and some of this benefit should be returned to the communities. Index linked rates per installed MW with production bonuses over and above industry norms should form the benchmark for defining rates of community benefit. Alternatively communities could be offered the opportunity of buying into the production capacity. Again, rates should be defined.

If this were the case, communities would be able to make objective decisions on the desirability of such installations within their areas. Subjective views on the desirability or otherwise of renewable energy projects, whilst usually valid, have been responsible for a great deal of divisiveness within local communities. A greater number of objective criteria are required.

P 47. Personal view. Wild lands are important and should be preserved but NOT to the extent that development is completely excluded at all costs. The views and needs of local inhabitants should always be considered. Planning restrictions should not be prohibitively prescriptive. Changes have always taken place over time and no-one should suggest that economic poverty (usually associated with wild lands) is either desirable or the norm.

P 50. Personal view. Windfarms can generate large amounts of income for local communities. Being a supporter of the concept of renewable energy (including windfarms) I have a problem with the use of the phrase 'protection from windfarms'. There is no evidence that windfarms are damaging to anything. They certainly have an impact (especially visual) but this is a subjective view and that fact should be recognised in any planning guidelines.

The area I live in and am interested in - Creich CC - already has 2 major windfarm installations situated within it, with a third waiting for a grid connection. Yet the area is zoned on the map on page 50 as one designated for significant protection. This does not make sense. One gets the feeling that the map has been drawn without sufficient reference to what is happening on the ground. What is the case in other areas which I do not have first hand knowledge of ?

The danger of prescriptive maps of this sort is that situations can change and, in this industry, history would show that change happens rather rapidly. To my mind, all planning for windfarms should be considered on a basis of individual merit rather than on a broad brush or arbitrary map line. Merit should include community benefit.

P 65. Personal view. Allow the development of agricultural land where economic development which can result would have a greater local impact than current or predictable agricultural use. Agriculture is constantly changing, so too should the use of agricultural land. Market forces will usually dictate land use. Do not become too prescriptive.

Thank you for the opportunity to comment and I do apologise for my late response.

Pete Campbell
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30/11/2009