

# Call for Sites and Ideas Guide Gairm airson Làraich is Bheachdan



*West Highland  
& Islands*  
Local Development Plan



**This is the *Call for Sites and Ideas Guide*. It explains what the plan is, why it is important and how you can make comments. Specifically, it helps you fill in the *Call for Sites and Ideas Response Form*.**

**This *Form* should be filled in on-line via the Council's relevant webpage [www.highland.gov.uk/whildp](http://www.highland.gov.uk/whildp)**

**If this is not possible then please contact the Development Plans Team on 01349 886608 and we will arrange an alternative means of you making your comments.**

You can keep up-to-date and involved with the plan as it progresses through our website, Facebook and Twitter pages.

Website: [www.highland.gov.uk/whildp](http://www.highland.gov.uk/whildp)



Highland Development Plans



@highlanddevplan

If you have any further queries, having read the Guide, please contact us by email [whilp@highland.gov.uk](mailto:whilp@highland.gov.uk) or phone 01349 886608 and ask to be put through to the development plans team.

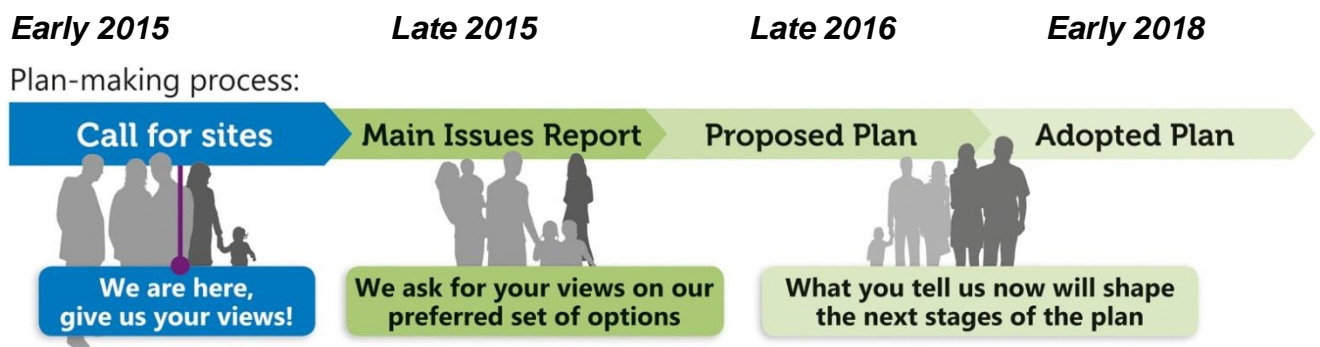
## 1. What is a Local Development Plan?

1.1 A local development plan is one of the most important documents in deciding what is built and where. It affects the outcome of planning applications and influences public and private investment decisions. It is a statutory document and looks forward as to what should happen in the next 10-20 years.

## 2. What is the Purpose of the *Call for Sites and Ideas*?

2.1 The Highland Council is preparing a Local Development Plan (LDP) for the West Highland and Islands (see area covered on map below).

2.2 The initial stage of plan-making involves a *Call for Sites and Ideas*; this is the stage we are at now (see diagram below). This allows everyone to have their say at the outset before any important decisions are made.



2.3 We want your views on the following: (relevant questions throughout the Guide will explain in detail what this information means and how your views should be submitted on the *Response Form*)

- Suggestions on which land, over the next 10 years, should be developed and which areas should be protected across the West Highland and Islands area.
- Suggestion on your bigger ideas, or Vision for how the area should change over the next 10-20 years.
- Tell us, if your community group wish to produce its own community plan.
- Give us your views and any preferred alterations to existing Special Landscape Area boundaries.
- Give us your views and any preferred alterations to our Fort William Hinterland boundary.

### 3. Who should Respond to the Call for Sites and Ideas?

3.1 Anyone who, over the next 10-20 years may wish to be involved in shaping the future of the West Highland and Islands area, through, for example:

- Promoting a building project, or any kind of development (**we are particularly interested in any larger scale proposals within the larger towns and villages shown on the map below**), and/or;
- Safeguarding an area of cherished green space from building, and/or;
- Any community body who wishes to produce their own plan for a smaller settlement/area, and/or;
- Giving your views on Special Landscape Area and Fort William Hinterland boundaries.

3.2 Landowners, developers and builders wishing to test their development idea(s) should consider whether submission of a planning application may give them a quicker answer to their proposal(s). The Plan process can take 2/3 years so a Plan submission is most suitable for those landowners looking at development potential in the longer term but who do not want to incur the cost and risk of a planning application.



## 4. How do I Submit my Views?

### Where can I get the Response Form?

4.1 The *Call for Sites and Ideas Response Form* is best accessed via the Council's website [www.highland.gov.uk/whildp](http://www.highland.gov.uk/whildp) and should be **filled out and submitted online**. **If this is not possible then please contact the Development Plans Team on 01349 886608 and we will arrange an alternative means of you making your comments.**

### Is the Form Easy to Fill In?

4.2 Yes. **You only have to fill in your personal and contact details and one site or idea. Other sections can be skipped.** If you have more sites and ideas, the *Form* allows you to submit multiple ideas and up to 3 sites. If you have even more sites and ideas then several forms can be submitted. You can attach/upload additional information that helps describe, illustrate or justify your site(s)/idea(s).

4.3 Please be aware that the form **will not save your progress and may time out if you leave it open without typing or clicking on anything for more than 10 minutes**, which will cause you to lose anything you have already completed. This will also happen if you close the form without submitting it at the end. We therefore advise that you draft any long answers first then copy and paste them into the online form. A quick guide to the on-line form will be available on request to enable you to see the form's contents before starting to complete the online response form.

4.4 Please supply as much detail as you can. We need to understand the "what", "where" and "why" of your site(s)/idea(s) for your suggestions to be given full consideration for inclusion in the Plan.

### How do I Justify My Suggestions?

4.5 Although we will consider all suggestions, those that are relevant and have a clear and reasonable justification will have the best chance of being included in the Plan. Therefore we need to know whether the owner(s) of land/buildings affected is (are) likely to be agreeable to a suggestion. For development ideas, we need to know whether the land can and should be built on. For example, can it be connected to water, sewerage and a public road? Is the land subject to risks such as flooding, landslides, settlement, or contamination. What will be the effect on the environment if the development happens? Can anything be done to reduce or eliminate any negative impacts.

4.6 Use your local knowledge or talk to others in the community who know the history of a site or area. Please add photographs and plans to describe what you mean. We will do a formal assessment of the likely environmental effects of all suggested development sites. Experienced developers/agents should provide as much information as possible to assist the Council in producing this [Strategic Environmental Assessment \(SEA\)](#). A template of the [SEA matrix](#) we will use for this process is available on the Council's website, or can be made available on request.



### How do I submit my Suggested Sites for Protection?

4.7 Section 3 of the *Form* allows people to suggest green spaces that are valued and cherished by the wider community and therefore should not be built on. As with suggested development sites, we need a mapped boundary for the land suggested and a justification (in this case for why it should be protected). Areas that people enjoy walking through or by would be appropriate such as woodland or parkland. Sports pitches and play areas are protected by different planning policies so we don't want these suggestions. Also new changing facilities or play equipment may be needed and this may need a planning permission because it is a form of development. Please attach photographs that illustrate the character and value of the area(s) you suggest.

### How do I record my Bigger Ideas and Vision for the Future of the area?

4.8 Planning for the future requires a clear and agreed vision of what sort of West Highland and Islands people want to see in the future as a place to live, work, be schooled, enjoy recreation and travel through. How do you want the place to have changed in 20 years time? Section 4 of the *Form* offers you the chance to record your views on these bigger ideas. Please attach/upload any photographs or other material to explain or illustrate what you mean.

### Where can I get a Map to draw the Boundary of my Suggestion?

4.9 Please download and print off the map you need from our web-site. The existing local plan maps cover every town and village we'll be covering in the new Plan and are available via:

The West Highland and Islands Local Plan (Skye, Lochalsh and Lochaber)

[http://www.highland.gov.uk/info/178/local\\_and\\_statutory\\_development\\_plans/216/local\\_development\\_plans/9](http://www.highland.gov.uk/info/178/local_and_statutory_development_plans/216/local_development_plans/9)

The Wester Ross Local Plan

[http://www.highland.gov.uk/downloads/download/544/wester\\_ross\\_local\\_plan\\_adopted\\_june\\_2006\\_-\\_settlement\\_development\\_areas](http://www.highland.gov.uk/downloads/download/544/wester_ross_local_plan_adopted_june_2006_-_settlement_development_areas)

Add your suggestion to the map you've printed off and attach it to your submission. A hand drawn map will suffice if you can't manage this.

### Can my Suggestions be kept Confidential?

4.10 No. We can't keep your suggestions confidential because this is a public process. However, we will redact (exclude or blackout) all private phone numbers, e-mails addresses, and signatures from whatever you send in before it can be seen by others.

## 5. Can the Local Community Produce its Own Plan?

5.1 Yes, but only for the smaller settlements where the Council doesn't intend to produce detailed guidance and where the community has positive development ideas. Our initial view is that we will only produce detailed town and village plans for the following places:

*Ballachulish (including North, South & Glenachulish), Broadford, Dunvegan (including Kilmuir & Lonemore), East Slea (Teangue to Armadale), Fort William, Gairloch, Glencoe, Kinlochleven, Kyle of Lochalsh, Kyleakin, Lochcarron, Mallaig, Plockton, Portree, Spean Bridge (including Inverroy & Roy Bridge), Staffin, Strontian, Ullapool.*

5.2 We intend to produce briefer, planning guidance for the medium size villages. However, **we are not intending to produce settlement plans for the smallest settlements**. We recognise that these communities may wish to promote and lead development and may feel disadvantaged by the lack of a Council plan for their township or village. **Therefore, we are inviting any community group, landowner or developer that wishes to produce its own plan** to record an interest now via Section 5 of the *Form*.

5.3 We will consider such submissions and may offer assistance in how to produce the plan, how to consult on it and how to give it statutory status. We are piloting two such plans at present - one from the Isle of Rum Community Trust and one from Forestry Commission Scotland for a tourism development at Leanachan. This invitation is particularly suitable for those groups that wish to promote sustainable development and already have a proven track record of accessing funding and good internal community consultation.

## 6. How do I Comment on Special Landscape Area (SLA) Boundaries?

6.1 We have identified landscapes in the West Highland and Islands area which we think are special enough to be protected from significant development. We have called these Special Landscape Areas. These are in addition to nationally designated landscapes, called National Scenic Areas. Section 6 of the *Form* offers an opportunity to say if and how the boundaries of our special landscape areas should change.

6.2 We justify our existing boundaries in documents called citations. These can be read via our website [SLA citations](#). We think the boundaries should follow definite physical features whether natural or man-made, and enclose an area of similar or complementary landscape in terms of their type and/or quality.

6.3 Please download, print and amend the boundaries from the existing [Special Landscape Area Maps](#) on our website and attach your suggestions. The map below shows you the names and areas covered by the existing SLAs.



- Settlement
- Special Landscape Area
- WHI Plan Area

**WESTER ROSS**

**SKYE AND LOCHALSH**

**LOCHABER**

LITTLE MINCH

THE MINCH NORTH MINCH

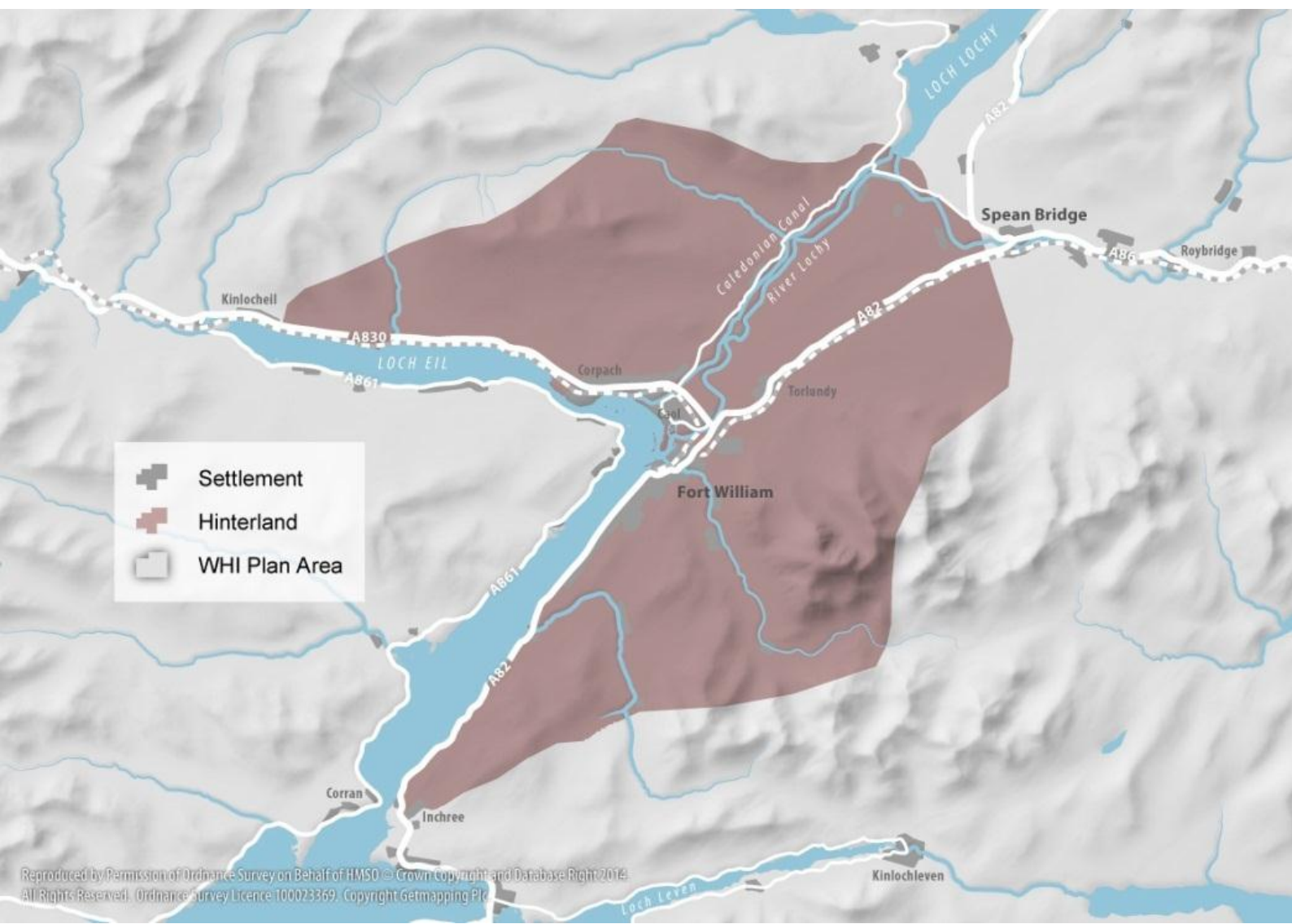
SEA OF THE HEBRIDES



## How do I Comment on the Fort William Hinterland boundary?

7.1 We have identified an area of countryside, called a Hinterland, around Fort William (see map below) within which we believe there should only be limited housing development. This is because a less restrictive approach close to a major town would be likely to support too many houses in the open countryside. We don't believe that this open landscape with its lack of proper services (such as wider roads, sewers and community facilities) could support major "unplanned" development.

7.2 Section 7 offers a chance to suggest moving the boundary closer to or further away from Fort William depending on whether you feel the countryside areas close to the edge of boundary shown below can or can't cope with further housing development. Think about whether you believe the demand for housing in the countryside (particularly from commuters) will go up or down over the next 10 years and the remaining capacity of the local landscape and service networks. A detailed version of the [Fort William Hinterland](#) map is available online, or available on request; which can be used to draw suggestions and attach/upload to the Form.



## 7. When and Where should I Submit my Suggestions?

8.1 The *Call for Sites and Ideas Form* is available via The Highland Council website [www.highland.gov.uk/whildp](http://www.highland.gov.uk/whildp) in most cases this is how suggestions should be submitted. The *Call for Sites and Ideas* process will run for 2 months, from **30<sup>th</sup> January until the deadline of 5pm on the 27<sup>th</sup> March 2015.**

8.2 Where it is not possible to submit the form online, or if you have any further queries please email [whilp@highland.gov.uk](mailto:whilp@highland.gov.uk) or phone 01349 886608 and ask to be put through to a member of the development plans team to arrange an alternative method of submission.

## 8. What happens to Sites in the Existing Local Plans?

9.1 For those that are aware of the existing Wester Ross and West Highland and Islands Local Plans, we will re-consider whether the sites contained in these plans are still relevant and appropriate to be included in the new Plan.

9.2 If you are an owner and/or potential developer of one of these sites you should confirm whether or not you still wish to make the land available, when, and any changes you wish made to the site's proposed use(s), boundary and requirements.

## 9. What Happens after I've Submitted my Suggestions?

10.1 Following the submission of your *Call for Sites and Ideas Form* we will:

- Acknowledge its receipt;
- Check its contents and may come back to you if we think there's something missing or we don't understand your views;
- Consider it for inclusion in the first, statutory draft of the Plan, called the *Main Issues Report*;
- Publish the *Main Issues Report* (you will then be able to see whether we've included your suggestions and whether the Council prefers your suggestions ahead of those of others);
- Invite you and others to comment on the Council's site and policy preferences as set out in this *Main Issues Report*;
- Publish the Council's final choices of sites and policies in the second, statutory draft of the Plan called the *Proposed Plan*;
- Invite you and others to make more formal objections to the Council's choices if you are not happy with those choices;
- If you are an objector at that point, refer your concerns to an independent person (a Scottish Government appointed Reporter) for him/her to test the merits of your suggestions compared to the views of the Council, and;
- Produce the finished Plan including the changes recommended by the Reporter.

10.2 As you can see, the current *Call for Sites and Ideas* is only the start of a relatively long process. You will not get a final answer to your suggestion for 2-3 years because the statutory process requires several opportunities for public comment, proper consideration of suggestions received and an independent hearing of objections.

### **Please Note**

Suggestions submitted on the Response Form cannot be treated as confidential. Any photographs or other attachments will not be copyright and may be used in the production of future planning documents.

The Council cannot accept suggestions without a name and contact details. Suggestions will be made available for public inspection, except any information which would be subject to the Data Protection Act 1998.

***Thank you for taking the time to read this guidance.***

**To take part in the Call for Sites and Ideas Exercise please visit [www.highland.gov.uk/whildp](http://www.highland.gov.uk/whildp) to fill in and submit an online Response Form.**

**If you require alternative access to the form or require further assistance please contact the Development Plans Team by email [whilp@highland.gov.uk](mailto:whilp@highland.gov.uk) or phone 01349 886608.**