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Supporting statement to Highland Council for consideration of land allocation under Local Development Plan review

Client: Mr Alistair MacGregor

Project Ref: 2015016

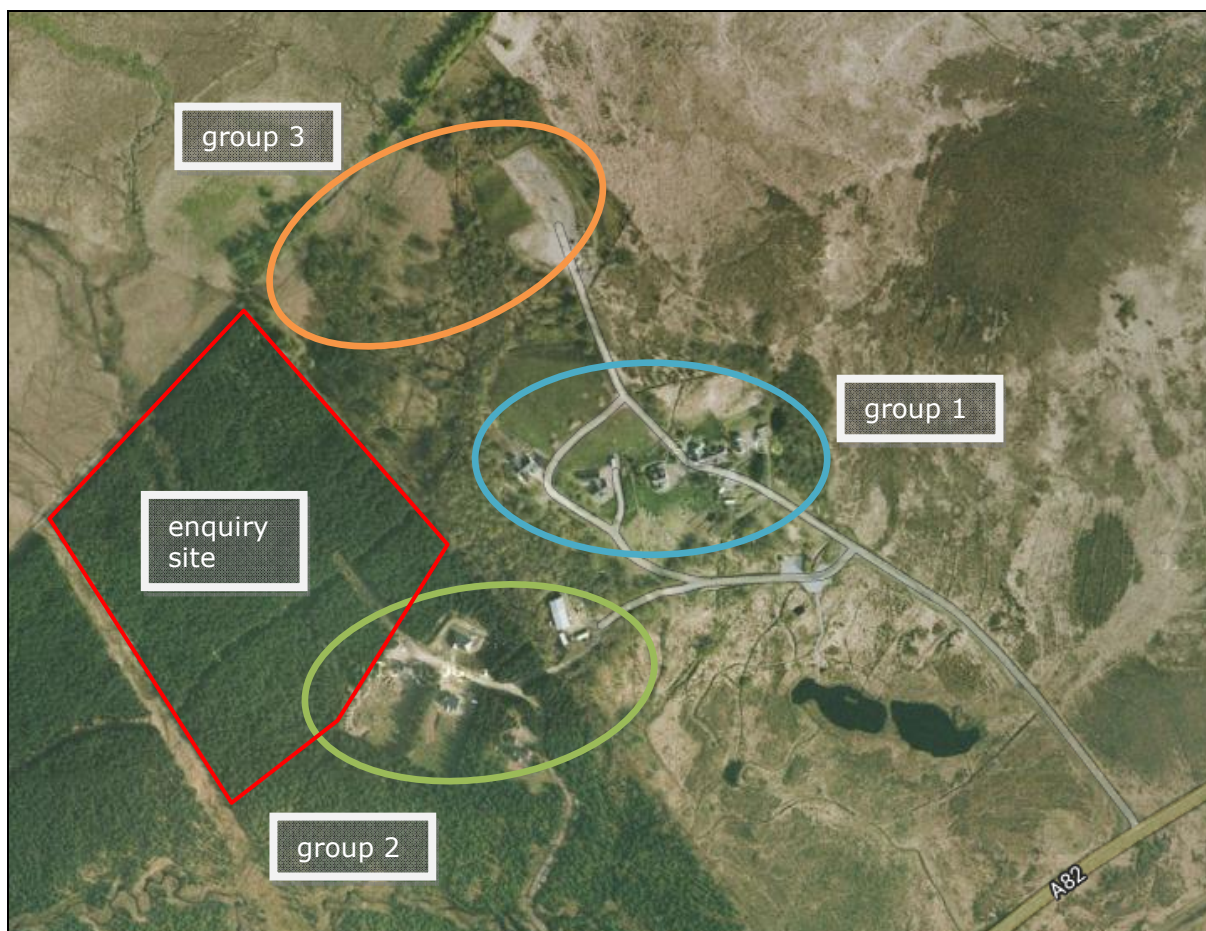
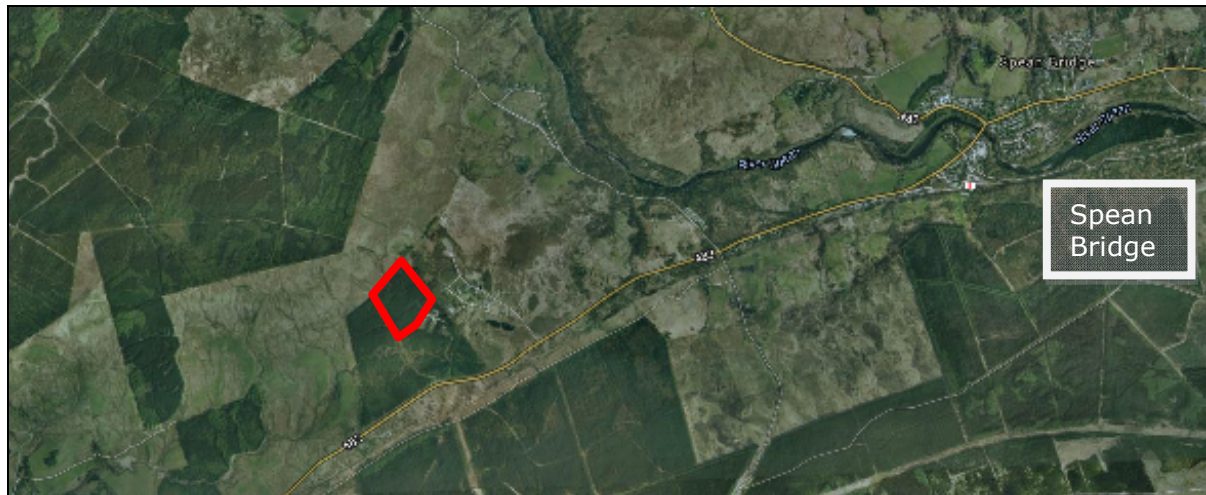
Allocation: Proposed tourism allocation

Site: Land west of Achnabobane, Spean Bridge



Current situation/site description

Achnabobane is a housing group set within the broader hinterland around Fort William, within the southern end of the Great Glen, approximately 1 mile west of Spean Bridge. An existing adopted road runs from the A82 towards a central group of six houses and B&B's, with a further adopted spur to the west giving access to four houses and a deer larder/gym. A final grouping of house plots lies to the north and is part way through the implementation phases. The western end is marked by plantation forestry, an area of which has been clear felled by the landowner over the last 6 years or so.



Proposal

The landowner aspires to achieve a holiday unit development at the site, similar in scale to the chalet development near Moy, Gairloch. Design proposals have not been prepared as yet, but the land area would appear to have capacity to accommodate between 12 and 18 self contained holiday units. A low rise chalet style or A frame units with timber finishes would be appropriate to the broader context, where open hillside grazing and forestry areas are predominant. Such a design approach would enable a development that was recessive in appearance within the landscape and provided high amenity values for holiday makers.

Access could be achieved from the existing adoptive standard road, with some enhancement to the existing private track which is also within the landowner's control.

A public water supply and private drainage arrangements would be designed.

The site could be serviced/operated from one of the existing houses nearby at Achnabobane, perhaps with a simple reception unit as a point of entry/focus for holiday makers.

The tourism sector remains strong in Lochaber in general and the Great Glen in particular, and this proposal would contribute to meeting that demand. The site is deliverable and the construction phases would provide work to some of the many small construction firms operating in Lochaber and running the site would require 2 or 3 full time equivalent personnel.

The allocation would be in an area where adjacent forestry and rising land provides excellent containment without hemming the holiday makers in. Adjacent housing would be marginally impacted, but with careful design and strategic broadleaf planting, the long term setting of the site will be improved both for the holiday makers and the adjacent householders.

Summary

We ask that an allocation is made for tourism development at the site to provide a low density timber chalet style development or up to 18 units. We look forward to hearing from you following your consideration of the site for inclusion in the LDP.

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Stephen Fair MRTPI MURP

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