
From: West Highlands and Islands Local Development Plan
Subject: FW: West Highland and Islands Local Development Plan [#322]

Section 1: Brian Williams

**Your
personal
and contact
details**

1.1 Name *

1.2 Are you? a member of the public
* a landowner / developer

**Select a
topic to
comment
on** Record an interest in producing a community plan

Protection Croft land to the East of the Geary Township road along it's whole length

Site 1

3.1 Address

/

**Description
of Land**

3.2 Total of approximately 20 landowners each holding one or more of 33 crofts
**Landowner's
name (if
known)**

3.3 Location

Plan



[geary_plan_1.pdf](#) 104.17 KB • PDF

3.4 Why should the land be protected?

Geary is a traditional crofting area which has not as yet been overdeveloped and still maintains a linear settlement of dwellings along the West side of the Township road. There are no dwellings on the Eastern (seaward) side of the road which is better quality land more suitable for crofting and grazing of animals. we feel that the area should be protected from development on the East, leaving that land available for continued use as a crofting area in the future. If and when this land disappears, it will be lost for all future generations. Geary is an exceptionally good example of

how a crofting community developed in the past and should be kept as such.

5.1 Name of Geary
place that
wishes to
produce its
own plan

5.2 Any additional details

As an inhabitant of Geary and as Clerk of the Common Grazings Committees in Geary, I would like to express my concern that there is no intention of including any local development plan for the Geary Township in this proposal for the WHILDIP for consultation at this stage. When the last Local Development plan for the Highlands was proposed and put out to consultation in 2008, it initially included a Local plan for Geary, which was discussed at a Township meeting held at the same time as the meetings of the Geary grazing committees. The feelings expressed by all were remarkably similar and the proposed draft local development plan was supported in the main areas of the Geary Township. There was some concern expressed about a short section of the township road near the North end which was shown to allow planning applications for developments to the East of the road and it was felt that no further development should be allowed here or along any of the Eastern side of the township road. The other concern was the relative size of the area designated for large scale housing development on the Common grazing land to the North of the township road. This was felt to be too large for the size of the existing Geary Township and would have destroyed the feel of the area.

The local plan had two main functions.

Firstly, developers were to be encouraged to seek planning permission in the areas where current house development had previously taken place as a linear housing development. Traditionally, all of the houses were sited in a ribbon of land to the West side of the township road on poorer quality and more rocky land.

Secondly, the superior grazing and crofting land to the East (seaward side) of the Township road should be kept available for crofting purposes as Geary has always been traditionally a crofting area. This also helped to give the best available views across Loch Snizort to the East from all of the dwellings.

I am concerned that unless these aspects of planning within the township are incorporated into the WHILDIP we will have to repeat the exercise of protecting the croft-land each time anyone applies for planning permission for any development to the East of the road. This is a waste of time for both crofters and the planning department alike and should in my view be tackled once, for the next phase of allowed developments in the future, to protect both crofting land and the visual amenities of all the inhabitants of Geary rather than the profit motives of a minority of non-resident landowners.

The map of the local development plan of Geary which was proposed in 2008 could actually be incorporated as it stands for inclusion in the WHILDIP without alteration except for some consideration being given to the very large area of housing development on common grazing land at the Northern end of the township road.

While this site is correctly chosen for development, there was a general feeling when it was discussed in 2008 that there would be a possible issue of lack of infrastructure in public transport, roads, shops and general amenities which should be addressed before housing development on that scale was allowed. This feeling was not to stop any development from taking place there but to control the rate of change of the development, where a smaller initial development could lead on to further expansion in the future.

Our proposals for the objectives for planned development within the Geary Township could include the following:

Local Plan consultation

Objectives for Geary

- To safeguard the historical structure of the township, and preserve the 'ribbon development' of dwellings along the west side of the township road.
- To secure exceptional siting and design quality where public seaward or 'lochward' views are likely to be affected or land within a landscape designation.
- To secure developer funded road improvements where a network deficiency is created or worsened.
- To protect seaward or 'lochward' views where applicable.
- To safeguard in by croft land quality by favouring siting on poorer parts of crofts to the west of the road or on common grazings where applicable.
- Protect wildlife habitats along the seaward margins of the township.
- Enable planned township development in areas that will not adversely affect a crofting community.