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Mr Stuart Black
Director of Planning and Development
Planning and Development Service
The Highland Council
Glenurquhart Road
Inverness
IV3 5NX

Our Ref: CM/YM/1898

Date: 27 April, 2011

Dear Sir

INNER MORAY FIRTH LOCAL DEVELOPMENT PLAN
ACHAREIDH ESTATE, NAIRN: MR R D GORDON

We act for Mr Ronald Gordon, Achareidh House, Altonburn Road, Nairn.

Further to the Council's "Call for Sites" invitation please find attached a representation in respect of land at Achareidh Estate, Nairn.

The site is a substantial land holding and an integrated part of the town, well located to facilities and with potential to contribute substantially to "urban sustainability". There are limited opportunities for consolidating the town within its existing structure.

The adopted Local Plan identifies some potential for development at Achareidh, but does not make a specific allocation of land. We are pleased to respond positively to the invitation in the letter dated 9 September, 2010 from Tim Stott to pursue a development proposal.

Our approach is to respect the setting of the Category B Listed Building Achareidh House including its mature trees and commercial woodland and recognise that these assets are integral to a high quality, low density residential development and a unique opportunity in the Inner Moray Firth area to address a particular market niche.

In that regard, it is proposed that development will be subject to a masterplan underpinned by specialist inputs to inform landscape capacity, an architectural concept and access; and in turn, the scale and form of development, that will balance an exceptional urban design outcome and the conservation interest.

Our proposal is that embracing the entirety of the Estate within a masterplan will avoid a piecemeal approach and enable maximum flexibility in terms of the location and "take" of land for development pending the specialist inputs - Landscape Capacity and Visual Impact Assessment and Transport Statement - referred to above. Access factors will further inform the scale of development and there is recognition in the Sandown Appeal Decision that capacity exists in the adjoining road network.

For the moment we present an exceptional development opportunity for your consideration and would be pleased to be involved in discussion with you should there be matters which require explanation or assistance on our part.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Colin Mackenzie', with a stylized flourish at the end.

Colin Mackenzie
G H Johnston Building Consultants Ltd

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Site Forms

YOUR DETAILS	
Your Name (and organisation if applicable)	COLIN MACKENZIE G H JOHNSTON BUILDING CONSULTANTS LTD
Your Address / Contact Details	see below
Landowner's Name (if known / applicable)	R D GORDON
Agent (if applicable)	G H JOHNSTON BUILDING
Agent's Address / Contact Details (if applicable)	CONSULTANTS LTD
	WILLOW HOUSE
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DETAILS OF SITE SUGGESTED	
Site Address	ACHAREIDH ESTATE, NAIRN
Site/Local Name (if different from above)	
Site Size (hectares)	17 ha.
Grid Reference (if known)	NH 870 565
Proposed Use (e.g. housing, affordable housing, employment, retail, waste, gypsy traveller, utility, community, retained public open space)	low density housing
Proposed Non Housing Floorspace / Number of Housing Units (if known/applicable)	Site capacity to be determined by balance of safeguards for the setting of the listed buildings, the character and trees, and services including access;

	subject to a masterplan
Map	attached

If you wish to suggest a site that should <u>not</u> be built on, fill in this form	
REASONS WHY YOUR SITE SHOULD BE SAFEGUARDED FROM BUILDING	
How do the public enjoy the space - e.g. used for dog walking, children's play?	
What makes the site more special than other areas in the village/town?	
Does the site have attractive or rare features such as mature trees, historical significance or protected wildlife?	

Landowners, developers and/or agents wishing to suggest a site should fill in the following form and as much as possible of the strategic environmental assessment form (at the end of this document) which assesses the environmental effects of possible development sites.

If you wish to suggest a site that should be built on, fill in this form	
REASONS FOR YOUR DEVELOPMENT SITE SUGGESTION	
How can the site be serviced? (give details of proposed access, foul drainage, surface water and water supply arrangements)	Access to the public road network (Altonburn Road). Foul drainage to mains with spare capacity for "windfall"/consolidation; water supply from mains with existing capacity, subject to scale of development. Surface water by SUDS to site.
FORM CONTINUES BELOW	

REASONS FOR YOUR DEVELOPMENT SITE SUGGESTION

What are the site's constraints and how can they be resolved or	The site comprises of three fields at the Achareidh Estate and Farm that are presently in
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<p>reduced? (e.g. does the site flood, are there protected species present, will good farmland be lost, will the local landscape be affected, will valued trees be felled, are any other heritage features likely to be affected?)</p>	<p>agricultural use. It adjoins a Category B Listed Building, mature amenity woodland, treed margins and commercial plantations. As these features are part of a fine heritage and the context for development, any proposal will require the highest standards of urban design and a comprehensive masterplan as an essential framework for development, infrastructure and heritage. It will incorporate appropriate safeguards - including for the setting of the Listed Building - and will integrate such features as part of an exceptional, high quality built development. The balance of such considerations and the scale of development will be regulated also by the capability of the local road network to serve the site. A masterplan - to be informed by a Landscape Capacity and Visual Impact Assessment and Transport Statement - will indicate the location/land take and form of development and ensure a low density character reflecting the policy objectives of the Nairnshire Local Plan.</p>
<p>What benefits will result to the wider community from the site's development? (e.g. will there be more or better jobs, will the land be put to a more productive use, will the development increase infrastructure capacity for others, will more affordable houses result, is there an unmet demand for the development?)</p>	<p>The Achareidh Estate comprises a development opportunity unparalleled in the Inner Moray Firth area in that its position within a historic town and heritage setting offer scope for a quality of development with unique market appeal. It presents a positive contribution to "urban sustainability", to the town's economic and social prosperity, its "connectivity" and environmental quality. The site will help meet part of the housing market that is not satisfied at present and extend choice locally; it will help support the economy, community facilities and the social infrastructure of the town, and make use of the existing infrastructure networks.</p>
<p>What impact will there be on travel patterns from the site's development? (e.g. will more or less people engage in active and healthy travel (walk / cycle) or go by public transport as a result of the site's development rather than travel by private car?)</p>	<p>The site will impact positively on travel patterns in that - as part of the built up area - it is well placed to the town centre, public facilities, major sources of employment and connection via established public transport routes.</p>
<p>Is the site well connected? (e.g. will the average travel time to community and commercial facilities reduce or increase as a result of the site's development, is the proposed use compatible with existing / proposed surrounding uses?)</p>	<p>As above. The site presents a positive response to travel within Nairn. Further afield, its attractiveness derives from its relative proximity - in the sub-region - to Inverness and the A96 corridor and the national airport, road and rail transport systems. The proposal is consistent with the residential character of uses that surround the site.</p>
<p>Is the site energy efficient? (e.g. will the site allow for energy efficient siting, layout, building design and local renewable energy source connection?)</p>	<p>The site is sheltered but open with an east-to-west aspect. It offers sufficient flexibility to ensure the siting and orientation of buildings is able to maximise solar gain and ground source options; and that buildings are able to be designed to incorporate domestic efficiency applications.</p>
<p>What other negative impacts will the development have and how will they be resolved or offset? (e.g. will the site's development increase any form of pollution or</p>	<p>n/a</p>

decrease public safety?)	
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STRATEGIC ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT FORM

Landowners, developers and/or agents wishing to suggest a site should fill in as much as possible of the following form. Strategic environmental assessment of local development plan sites is now a statutory requirement and considers the possible environmental effects of development proposals. We will check your answers and fill in any gaps.

No.	Issue	Detailed Explanation	Answer	Any Proposed Mitigation Measures (how will you reduce or offset the effects of your development?)
1	a) Will the site safeguard any existing open space within the area? b) Will the site enable high quality open space to be provided within the area?	Will the site have any impact on useable public open space (such as parks, playing fields etc) or any opportunities to create additional public open space?	The site does not involve existing public open space. The site will safeguard open land within the Achareidh Estate consistent with the setting of the Listed Building, productive and appropriate use of such open land, the scale and form of development and the requirement to meet the open space obligations of the proposal.	A masterplan will provide a balance of development and open land.
2	Will the site encourage and enable provision for active travel (walking, cycling and public transport use)?	Is any part of the site within 400m straight line distance of any community/commercial building? or will development provide a community/commercial building within walking distance of existing residential areas? - Are there opportunities to create new walking/cycling routes or improve existing routes?	The site is located within approximately 400m of Secondary School facilities and public transport routes; and - in terms of its accessibility in the context of a sub-regional centre - within 1-1.5km of the town centre, community centre, sports facilities, hospital/medical facilities, primary schools, swimming pool, rail and bus stations, recreation facilities; it is within 400m of a proposed business park.	A masterplan will consider the scope to connect development to the existing circulation network, consistent with the layout and scale of development.
3	Does the site provide an opportunity for you to provide a financial contribution towards encouraging more sustainable travel patterns?	For example, can a subsidy to a local bus route be provided?	Sustainable transport contribution is not considered necessary given the position of the site, the proximity of existing services, and the opportunity it presents to consolidate the built up area.	n/a
4	Will the site involve "off site" road improvements that will contribute to	Is the site likely to improve the local road network such as junctions or crossings?	As required subject to assessment of the capacity of the existing road network. It is noted that the Appeal Decision in relation to	A masterplan will be founded on a Transport Statement which will relate the scale of the proposal to

	road safety?		a proposal for 550 houses at Sandown indicates “the option of further speed restriction measures on Altonburn Road, if considered necessary, seem likely to reduce the risk of rat-running adequately” .	the capacity of the adjoining network.
5	Is there scope for road safety measures as part of the development of the site?	Will development incorporate on-site traffic calming measures (e.g. speed bumps) or street lighting? Will it incorporate the principles of Designing Streets available via: http://www.scotland.gov.uk/Publications/2010/03/22120652/0	Yes, but the context and scale of development and commitment to design quality befitting the proximity of the site to a Category B Listed Building, amenity woodland and trees will ensure a designed safe and pleasant environment without any requirement for remedial measures.	A masterplan would incorporate “Designing Streets” principles within the site.
6	Is the site near any existing “bad neighbour” uses?	Will the site be negatively affected by any neighbouring use? (bad neighbour uses include those that affect residential property by way of fumes, vibration, noise, artificial lighting etc). Is the site affected by any of the Physical Constraints identified in the Council’s Physical Constraints: Supplementary Guidance?	No. The site does not involve “bad neighbour” uses. The site does not involve any identified Physical Constraints (Highland-wide Local Development Plan [Policy 10]).	n/a
7	Are there any contaminated land issues affecting the site?	Are you aware if the site has been previously used for industrial or any other uses likely to cause contamination?	No. The site does not involve any contaminated land.	n/a
8	a) Is the site on derelict, vacant or other land that has previously been used? b) Is the site on greenfield land?	a) Has the site been identified in Scottish Government’s Vacant and Derelict Land Survey (which can be found here: http://scotland.gov.uk/Publications/2010/01/26135819/0) or has the land got an existing use? b) Will the site be located on presently undeveloped land e.g. presently or capably used for agriculture, forestry or amenity purposes?	No. The site does not affect derelict land. Yes. The site involves greenfield land that forms part of an agricultural unit.	n/a
9	Is the site within the	Is the site within any identified settlement	Yes. The site is located within the built-up	A masterplan will address the

	current settlement boundary?	boundary in the Local Plan? Is it allocated for any uses?	area. The adopted Local Plan applies a policy that states “The Council will safeguard established policies of townscape value. Development should be subservient in scale to the main building(s); sited to avoid loss of important open ground or trees damaging to the character, and where appropriate address deficiencies in open space”.	appropriate policy objectives in the context of present circumstances.
10	Will the site affect the distinctiveness and special qualities of the present landscape character or affect any landscape designation?	Does the site conform with the Landscape Capacity Assessment (if available)? Will the site result in the removal of valued landscape features or negatively affect any key views? Is it located within or would otherwise affect a National Scenic Area or Special Landscape Area, having regard to their special qualities?	Yes. The site does include the setting of a Category B Listed Building, but development will safeguard that feature and interest. It is not within any area designated for its landscape character (ie. NSA or any other Special Landscape Area) and it is not the subject of any capacity assessment. The character derives from the enclosure of the Estate by strong treed margins and woodland and for that views through and across the Estate are limited and would not be unduly affected by development.	A masterplan will be founded on a specialist landscape capacity and visual impact assessment and will incorporate landscape principles that derive from such assessment.
11	Will the site affect any areas with qualities of wildness? (that is land in its original natural state?)	Are you aware if the site is inside or likely to affect an area of Wild Land? (These areas are identified on Map 3 of SNH’s Policy Statement, Wildness in Scotland’s Countryside) and areas of Remote Coast identified by the Council, or an area of wildness identified in the draft Wild Land Supplementary Guidance?	No. The site does not involve wild land.	n/a
12	Will the site affect a conservation area?	Is the site inside or likely to affect the character of a confirmed Conservation Area?	No. The site does not affect a Conservation Area.	n/a
13	Will the site impact on any listed building and/or its setting?	Is there a listed building or a part of the setting “area” of a listed building within the site?	Yes. Achareidh House is a Category B Listed Building.	A masterplan will be founded on the principle of safeguarding the Listed Building and its setting.
14	Will the site affect a site identified in the Inventory of Gardens	Is any part of the site inside the outer boundary of an Inventory “entry” or will the site affect the setting of an “entry”?	No. The site does not comprise part of the Inventory of Gardens and Designed Landscapes.	n/a

	and Designed Landscapes?			
15	Will the site affect any locally important archaeological sites identified in the Historic Environment Record?	Does the site contain any features identified in the HER? If yes, will the site affect the feature?	Yes. The site contains two find sites recorded as part of the HER record. Development would not affect these sites.	A masterplan/any planning approval would be subject to archaeological survey as required.
16	Will the site impact on any Scheduled (Ancient) Monument and/or its setting?	Is there any SAM within the site boundary or will a SAM be affected?	No. The site will not affect any Scheduled Ancient Monument.	n/a
17	a) Will the site affect any natural heritage designation or area identified for its importance to nature conservation? b) Will the site affect any other important habitat for the natural heritage?	a) Is any part of the site inside or likely to affect the designation (SAC, SPA, SSSI, NNR, Ramsar) or Local Nature Conservation Site? b) Is any part of the site within or likely to affect non-statutory features identified as being of nature conservation importance e.g. Ancient, Semi-Natural or Long-Established Woodland Inventory sites, priority BAP habitats, habitats included on the Scottish Biodiversity List, non-designated habitats listed in Annex 1 of EC Habitats Directive?	No. The site does not affect any natural heritage (nature conservation) designation. The site contains long established woodland and commercial plantations.	A masterplan will fully respect woodland and trees as integral to the character and will include appropriate safeguards.
18	a) Will the site affect any protected species? b) Will the site affect any other important species	a) Will the site affect any European Protected Species, Badgers and species (birds, animals and plants) protected under the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 as amended. If such a species may be present on or near the site, a survey should be carried out to inform this assessment (for which a licence from SNH may be required) b) Will the site affect species listed in the UK and Local BAPs, the Scottish Biodiversity List	No. The site involves land which is regularly ploughed; it is acknowledged that surrounding habitats support protected species but these will be unaffected.	A masterplan would be subject to a habitats and species survey as required.

	for the natural heritage?	and relevant annexes of the EC Habitats Directive?		
19	Is the site proposed to provide any form of renewable energy?	For example, will the site provide or be capable of providing a district heating system, solar panels or a wind turbine?	Yes. The site is sheltered with an open southernly aspect and is capable of responding positively to solar gain and possibly ground source energy potential.	A masterplan will take account of the opportunity to position and orientate buildings to maximise the scope for domestic application of renewable energy sources.
20	Is any part of the site at risk from fluvial or coastal flooding as shown on SEPA's flood map or from local knowledge?	Are you aware of any part of the site being within the 1 in 200 year flood risk contour as identified by SEPA? (which can be found here: http://www.sepa.org.uk/flooding/flood_risk_maps/view_the_map.aspx)	No. The site presents no implications for flooding.	n/a
21	Will development of the site result in the need for changes in landform and level? If yes, how will soil and drainage issues be addressed?	Will there be any change in rate, quantity, quality of run-off plus groundwater impact on or off site? If so, will these affect priority habitats, especially blanket bog?	No. The site presents no implications for changes in land form or level.	n/a
22	Is there a watercourse, loch or sea within or adjacent to the site? If yes, how will the water environment be protected from development?	Will there be any culverting, diversion or channelling of existing watercourses?	No. The site presents no implications for watercourses.	n/a
23	Will the site offer opportunities for sustainable waste management?	Will the waste produced by the site be minimised and processed close to source in a sustainable way?	As per existing arrangement for Nairn.	n/a
24	Can the site be connected to the public water and sewerage system?	Can the site be connected at reasonable cost? If not, what alternative is proposed?	Yes. The mains network runs with or close to the edges of the Estate.	n/a
25	Will the site require alteration to the local landform?	Can the site (including access) be developed without significant re-contouring etc.? Will access tracks and parking areas have	No. The site presents no impact on the existing land form.	n/a

		significant cut and fill?		
26	Will the site affect or be affected by coastal erosion or natural coastal processes?	This will be noted on any relevant shoreline management plan.	No. The site presents no impact on coastal features.	n/a
27	Is the site sheltered from the prevailing wind and does it have a principal aspect between SW and SE?	Will development make best use of the site in terms of energy efficiency?	Yes. The site obtains shelter from all directions arising from the enclosure provided by mature treed avenues. It also enjoys an extensive open aspect to the south and is capable of maximising energy efficiency.	A masterplan will adapt development - in terms of its orientation and building design - to maximise the accessibility of the site to efficient energy.
28	Will the site have any impact upon local air quality?	Is the site near areas of employment or close to public transport? Such developments are less likely to result in additional traffic which may contribute to air pollution.	No. The site is located within the built-up area and is therefore of no structural significance. It is convenient to employment, services and public transport.	A masterplan will connect development to the existing network of public routes consistent with the character and functioning of the site and the scale of development.
29	Will the site have an impact on light pollution levels?	Is it likely that the Council policy likely will require street lighting at this location? Are there proposals for floodlighting on the site?	Yes. As part of the built-up area it will be served with street-lighting.	A masterplan will indicate street lighting to a standard required to minimise light pollution.
30	a) Will it the site affect the present green network of the area? b) Will the site provide opportunities to enhance the present green network of the area?	a) Will the site affect features that currently provide for the movement of species and/or people e.g. woodland, hedgerows, field margins, watercourses, coastlines, tree belts, greenspace? b) Will connectivity of natural features or open space and paths used for public amenity be improved? Will existing fragmentation of habitats and open spaces be improved? Will species be enabled to move where at present there is an obstacle?	Yes. The site will involve some loss of farm land. It will specifically safeguard the existing network of treed margins and avenues, woodland, gardens and the habitat that derives from these features. Their connectivity will be unaffected; habitats will not be fragmented and the connected network of green spaces and corridors will remain. The scale of development proposed will retain the existing amenity afforded by the Estate.	A masterplan will identify and define the amenity and heritage assets of the Estate; and make provision to safeguard and strengthen these features and integrate development in that setting.
31	Will the site provide opportunities for people to come into contact with and appreciate nature/natural	Is the site close to (within 1.5km) an opportunity to come into contact with nature/natural environments e.g. Local Nature Reserves, local greenspace, green networks? Are there proposals which will	Yes. The site is within 1.5 km of Nairn Beach and links; an immediately adjoining golf course, and the River Nairn and connecting local walks.	A masterplan will ensure connectivity with the existing networks linking these features.

	environments?	increase opportunities to come into contact with nature/natural environments?		
32	<p>a) Will the site affect any core paths or right of way?</p> <p>b) Will the site affect any other existing paths or outdoor access opportunities?</p> <p>c) Will the allocation provide new access opportunities within the site and linking to the path network beyond the site?</p>	<p>a) Is a diversion of a core path or right of way required? Will there be any impact on the usability of a core path or right of way?</p> <p>b) Will it affect an existing path in the Highland Path Record? Will it provide additional access opportunities or adversely affect access opportunities afforded by the Land Reform (Scotland) Act 2003?</p> <p>c) Will new paths be created within and beyond the site? Will any existing paths be improved e.g. to increase accessibility to a wider range of users? Will the site help to realise priorities identified in the Council's outdoor access strategy or aspirational paths identified in the core path plans?</p>	<p>No. The site does not affect any core path.</p> <p>No.</p> <p>Yes. The site will connect to the network of existing routes consistent with the layout of development.</p>	A masterplan will assess the potential for connectivity to existing routes.
33	Will the site have an impact on the geodiversity of the area?	Are you aware if the site lies within or adjacent to an un-notified Geological Conservation Review site or Local Geodiversity Site? (or other site with geodiversity value e.g. distinctive landforms, areas with natural processes, rock exposures for study?)	No. The site will not involve any impact on geo-diversity.	n/a
34	Will soil quality and capability of the site be adversely affected?	Will the site result in a loss of soil due to development or removal of good quality soil from the site? Is the site on land identified as Prime Quality Agricultural Land?	The land is part of a registered agricultural unit, but does not involve prime quality land.	n/a
35	Is the site on peatland?	Is the site within or functionally connected to an area of peatland? Would the allocation involve the disturbance of peat? If yes, how would impacts on peatland be avoided or minimised? Would any tree felling be required?	No. The site does not affect peat land.	n/a
36	Will the site have any	Does the site represent a significant loss of	No. The land does not form part of a croft	n/a

	affect on the viability of a crofting unit?	good quality inbye crofting land or common grazing land?	unit.	
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LAND AT ACHAREIDH ESTATE, NAIRN

SITE PLAN



G. H. JOHNSTON BUILDING CONSULTANTS LTD

