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Our Ref: HWLDP-EX1:13
Your Ref: LDP-270-3
Date: 7 October, 2011

Dear Ms Smith,

**HIGHLAND WIDE LOCAL PLAN - REQUEST FOR FURTHER INFORMATION – ISSUE 36
HOUSING IN THE COUNTRYSIDE (HINTERLAND AREAS)**

In reference to the reporters request for further information regarding the above issue the Council offer the following response;

The Council's policy application to housing development within the countryside is indicated within the supporting text to Policy 36, although the Council acknowledge that there is scope to further clarify the relation between the two policies and to what geographies are relevant to each. The Council commends the following text changes;

Amend para 19.7.2 and 19.7.3 to read (amended text highlighted);

"The Council maintains a two tier approach towards identifying the potential for housing development proposals within the countryside. Within the hinterlands around towns (as defined on the Proposals Map) Policy 36 Housing in the Countryside (Hinterland areas) will apply to proposals for housing development. The hinterland area around towns has been identified as where pressure for commuter based housing development is greatest. A more managed approach to housing development is required in the hinterland to prevent the suburbanisation of the countryside and the breaching of service network capacities. However, this approach does acknowledge that there is still potential for small scale housing development in the countryside based on existing groups, renovation and redevelopment opportunities and housing linked to rural businesses.

19.7.3 Housing development proposals outwith the hinterlands around towns will be determined in accordance with Policy 37 - Wider Countryside. Development within all countryside areas will also have to accord with the Housing in the Countryside / Siting and Design: Supplementary Guidance.

With regard to the policy text the Council also commend that in the final sentence of Policy 36 replace "relevant Siting and Design Guidance" with "Housing in the Countryside and Siting and Design Guidance" to correctly reflect the currently interim guidance.

In addition after the final sentence of Policy 36 insert; "*Housing development proposals outwith the hinterlands around towns will be determined in accordance with Policy 37 - Wider Countryside.*"

In respect of Policy 37 Wider Countryside the Council also commend the insertion of the following text; "*Housing proposals in the wider countryside will be determined against the relevant sections of the Housing in the Countryside and Siting and Design Guidance*".

I trust this response meets the requirement set out in the original request.

Yours sincerely

Brian MacKenzie
Principal Planner
Development Plans Team