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Brian MacKenzie  
Principal Planner  
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Our ref: LDP-270-3

15 September 2011

Dear Mr McKenzie

**HIGHLAND COUNCIL – HIGHLAND-WIDE LOCAL DEVELOPMENT PLAN  
THE TOWN AND COUNTRY PLANNING (DEVELOPMENT PLANNING)  
(SCOTLAND) REGULATIONS 2008  
NOTICE: REQUEST FOR FURTHER INFORMATION**

I am writing regarding Highland-wide Local Development Plan which has been submitted to DPEA on for examination by Scottish Ministers. Under Regulation 22 of the Town and Country Planning (Development Planning) (Scotland) Regulations 2008 the appointed reporters can request, by way of notice, further information in connection with the examination. This letter is a notice under Regulation 22.

The reporters have identified that further information, as listed below, should be provided by the council. It would be helpful if you could send this information to me, to pass on to the reporter, by 29 September 2011.

Issue 82 Caithness and Sutherland Vision

**Map/Figure 1**

The council's document "Proposed changes to the HwLDP resulting from the HRA of the plan" states that the wording on Figure 1 should be amended to "Caithness and Sutherland Vision" on the map and text below, to show that the map is part of the vision and to provide additional safeguarding. Is that the council's current position? Would the proposed changes involve substituting "Caithness and Sutherland Vision" for "Spatial Strategy: Caithness and Sutherland" on the map, and deleting "and Spatial Strategy" from paragraph 5.3? If so, is removal of the references to spatial strategy intended to avoid the impression that this section of the plan sets out policies per se? Does the same apply to the other area vision statements?

## **Dornoch Rail Link**

In its response to representations on the Dornoch Rail Link, the council stated that this project would not attract support or funding from the Scottish Government during the period of the plan. The reporter notes that the foreword to the plan states that it is intended to guide development and investment in the area over the next 20 years. How does the council justify its response given the 20 year timeframe of the plan?

## **Landscape protection**

In relation to the 4<sup>th</sup> bullet point, the Mountaineering Council of Scotland is concerned that appropriate stewardship of nationally and internationally important landscapes may not always be reflected in the interests of geographically local people. The council is invited to respond to that concern.

Please acknowledge receipt of this letter and confirm that it and, in due course, the council's responses, have been posted on the council's website. Please do not hesitate to contact me if there is anything you would like to clarify.

Yours faithfully

*Morag I Smith*

**Morag I Smith**  
**Development Plan Assistant**