



Chapter No:

25

Ardheslaig

16 - Mr and Mrs C Field [Written Submissions]

BACKGROUND

1. Ardheslaig is a widely dispersed group of houses around the head of an inlet at the north end of the Applecross peninsula. The Proposals Map Inset for Ardheslaig sets out the Development Factors and includes the following:

- “• Redevelopment of derelict croft buildings will be supported; and
- Any development at the coast must allow for existing or potential future foot access along the coast.”

2. The objections in relation to this settlement relate to the Development Factors and not to the Settlement Development Area as defined on the inset map.

3. The **objectors** pointed out that ‘redevelopment of derelict croft buildings’ should not include sites of buildings which no longer exist, or those where only rubble or other foundations remain. This could be resolved by the addition of the words “which are still standing” after “croft buildings”. This would encourage the redevelopment of unsightly derelict structures without creating a presumption in favour of development merely because a building had occupied the site many years previously.

4. In a separate objection, an additional Development Factor was sought to protect the spectacular views from the head of the loch and out to sea.

5. The **council** referred to structure plan Policy G2: Design for Sustainability, which set out that,

“Proposed developments will be assessed on the extent to which they:

- ...
- make use of brown field sites, existing buildings and recycled materials; [and]

- ❑ contribute to the economic and social development of the community...

Developments which are judged to be significantly detrimental in terms of the above criteria shall not accord with the structure plan.”

There were a number of derelict croft buildings in Ardheslaig and the council considered that these would benefit from redevelopment. However, any such proposal, whether on the site of a derelict

building or not would be subject to Policy 1 (now Policy 1A) of the local plan if it lay within the Settlement Development Area; and to the relevant part of Policy 2 (now Policy 1) if outwith the Settlement Development Area. Any proposals that did come forward would be assessed initially on the basis of these policies.

6. The council referred to the Landscape Capacity Study for the area, which had recognised the quality of the views over Ardheslaig and Loch Torridon when viewed from the coastal route, which ran at high level past the settlement. Accordingly, the council proposed to introduce an additional Development Factor to the inset map for Ardheslaig to state (additional text shown underlined):

“• The quality of the views over Ardheslaig and Loch Torridon from the high level road should be protected.”

CONCLUSIONS

7. National planning policy as expressed in Scottish Planning Policy 3: Planning for Housing includes a paragraph on the re-use of buildings in the countryside no longer required for their original purposes, and I refer to paragraph 56 in this regard (for full text of this paragraph, see Appendix 3 to this report). I find that the final sentence, which states that

“redevelopment should not automatically extend to the replacement of wholly derelict buildings or development of a different scale or character from that which existed previously.”

already fully supports the objection in this case and is another factor to be weighed up by the council in its assessment of any proposal for redevelopment, irrespective of whether or not it appears as a development factor on the inset map. I consider it to be unnecessary therefore to add it to the plan.

8. The council has accepted the objectors’ suggestion that an additional development factor at Ardheslaig was the view from the coastal route around the peninsula and has prepared an additional factor as a modification to the plan.

RECOMMENDATION

9. I therefore recommend that the additional Development Factor set out in paragraph 6 above be added to those already included in the Proposals Map Inset for Ardheslaig.